

Banning
chemical
weapons

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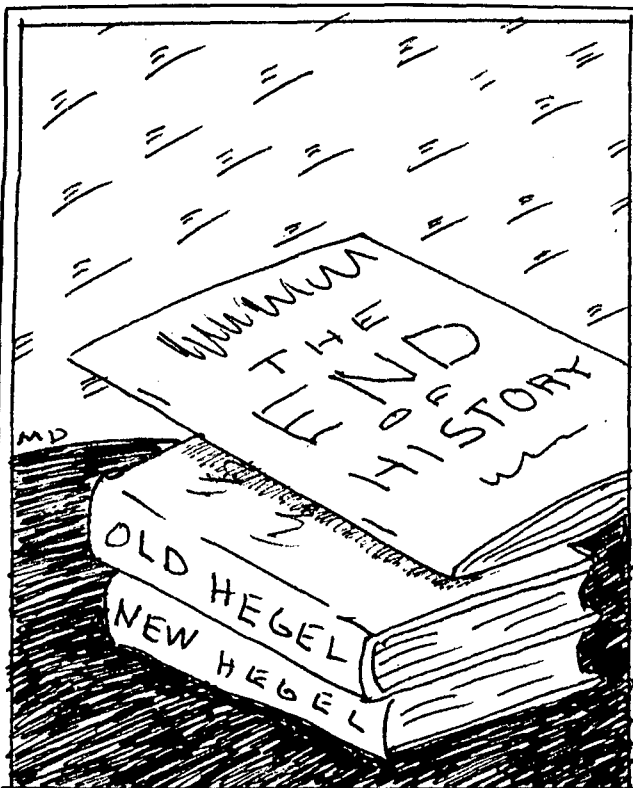
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SELL OUT

at the
E.P.A.

Administrator
William Reilly
is protecting
the polluters,
not the public.

Jim McNeill reports, page 8



Fukuyama: Hegel haggles, low Marx

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

On the face of it, Francis Fukuyama's recent essay titled the "The End of History?" should have attracted little attention in public-policy circles. Published in the summer edition of *The National Interest*, a neoconservative foreign-policy journal, it is an unabashed and, in spots, lame attempt to apply Hegel's philosophy of history to the current world.

But Fukuyama's version of Hegel has aroused intense interest in the nation's capital. *The National Interest* has already printed nine responses to the essay—by, among others, Allan Bloom, Irving Kristol and Sen. Daniel P. Moynihan (D-NY)—and the essay has been attacked in the op-ed pages of both the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. And after the controversy erupted, Fukuyama was the subject of a two-page profile in the *Washington Post*.

One reason the essay has caused such a stir is that Fukuyama, a former Rand Corporation researcher, is currently deputy director of the State Department's policy planning staff. Even though the essay was written before he joined the Bush administration, policy aficionados

here are taking it as an indication of startling intellectual ferment within the State Department. Fukuyama's piece has also offended both sides of the political spectrum. Conservatives, whose politics since World War II have been rooted in an apocalyptic anti-Communist crusade, are upset by his dismissal of the Cold War, while liberals are taking umbrage at his mindless celebration of American capitalism. But the uproar probably won't last: Fukuyama offers interesting insights about international relations, but his view of Hegel is muddy and his conception of capitalism is utopian if not silly.

Stages of history: Hegel propounded the first modern philosophy of history, and many of his assumptions remain embedded in the way Americans think about history and their society. Hegel can be credited with introducing the view that history is progress and that the final and highest stage of progress is embodied in modern capitalism. In a break with orthodox Christianity, he conceived of history as a set of coherent events driven from one stage to another—from slavery to feudalism to capitalism—by a dialectic of internal contradictions rather than by God's will. History was the "march of spirit through time," and spirit was the all-encompassing consciousness of humanity, which through the sum of individual actions sought higher and higher stages of freedom, finally reaching that of "liberal" capitalism.

Marx, by contrast, believed that capitalism was not the final stage of historical change and would eventually be superseded by socialism—a claim that appeared to be confirmed by the Russian Revolution and by succeeding revolutions in the name of socialism. Fukuyama, however, contends that Hegel's view of history has been vindicated by the success of market capitalism and by the East bloc's abandonment of Marxist-Leninist ideology. They represent "an unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism," Fukuyama writes. As communist states abandon communism, socialist and social-democratic parties have already become "very marginal to the real political discourse of their societies."

Fukuyama plays loose, however, with Hegel's conception of liberalism. Fukuyama uses "liberal" and "liberalism" to mean economic and political freedom. Yet Hegel identified liberalism with the economic liberty of the free market, not with political liberty or democracy. He favored a constitutional monarchy rather than a popular democracy. And it's highly unlikely that he would have endorsed Fukuyama's conclusion that the final stage of history is characterized by "liberal democracy" or by "economic and political liberalism."

Fukuyama also plays loose with contemporary reality by identifying the triumph of economic and political liberalism with the "unabashedly pro-market and anti-statist" programs of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. In the wake of the Thatcher and Reagan revolutions, few, if any, nations have endorsed their laissez-faire capitalism. Instead, most nations continue to practice a political economy that stands somewhere between capitalism and socialism, from the command economies of Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, to the more social-democratic economies of Western Europe. If anything, the future lies in the direction of these economies rather than the less-successful economies of the U.S. and the U.K.

The success of these non-laissez-faire economies does not necessarily mean that Marx was right—a new stage called socialism will follow that of capitalism—but it does imply that both Hegel and Fukuyama's view of the triumph of liberalism must be substantially revised, if not rejected.

Class divisions: Hegel's view of the final stage of history matured over time, but Fukuyama focuses only on his early writings. In those works Hegel saw the French Revolution's destruction of feudalism as the final triumph of freedom, but in his later work, *The Philosophy of History*, he took an agnostic view, noting the continued contradiction between the individualistic tendencies of market capitalism and the communal responsibilities of the state. Hegel's critic Marx redefined this contradiction as one between the working class and the capitalist class, rather than between the market and the state.

Fukuyama dismisses the contradiction that the later Hegel and Marx saw in capitalism, asserting that "the class issue has been successfully resolved in the West ... the egalitarianism of modern America represents the

essential achievement of the classless society envisioned by Marx." But he fails to prove this notion. Fukuyama ignores the existence of business cycles. And although acknowledging that poverty and unemployment exist, he believes they are the result of "cultural and social characteristics of groups ... which are in turn the historical legacy of premodern conditions." In other words, blacks cause unemployment and poverty, but they do so because of the pre-capitalist legacy of slavery and racism.

Fukuyama reminds one of the free-market apostles of the 1880s, 1920s and 1950s—periods that, like the present, are characterized by a cloying complacency about economic reality. His characterization of politics recalls Daniel Bell's *End of Ideology*, a book that had a large and immediate impact in the '50s but predictably faded in the '60s.

Contrary to Fukuyama's opinion, capitalism's contradictions remain. Even if movements opposing laissez-faire capitalism are quiet now, they will likely re-emerge with the next downturn of the business cycle. History is by no means over.

End of Cold War: Fukuyama is on firmer ground when he rejects the Cold War vision of international reality, arguing that the Soviet "new thinking" amounts to a de facto rejection of Marxism-Leninism. Although he does not suggest that the Soviet Union and China have joined the Reaganite family of nations, he does argue that they will not revert to their communist past.

That Soviet rejection, according to Fukuyama, not only indicates that the Cold War waged between capitalism and communism is over but also that a new military rivalry is unlikely to replace it. He rejects the view, advanced last December by conservative columnist Charles Krauthammer, that the Soviet Union will now become the agent of czarist rather than Marxist imperialism.

INSIDE STORY

Fukuyama contends that czarist imperialism, like that of other European states, was peculiar to the 19th century and will not necessarily be carried over to post-communist Russia. He writes that Krauthammer's theory "is a convenient point of view for people who want to admit that something major is changing in the Soviet Union but do not want to accept responsibility for recommending the radical policy redirection implicit in such a view."

Fukuyama's model for post-Cold War international relations is Western Europe's Common Market, which after World War II regularized relations among states that had suffered centuries of war, replacing military rivalry with regulated economic rivalry. With the end of Marxism-Leninism, he writes, the world is likely to witness the "growing 'Common Marketization' of international relations, and the diminution of the likelihood of large-scale conflict between states." Fukuyama argues that "international life for the part of the world that has reached the end of history is far more preoccupied with economics than with politics or [military] strategy."

This maverick view of international relations led Harvard political scientist Samuel Huntington to accuse Fukuyama of having adapted Marx's vision of communist society, in which "the administration of persons is replaced by the administration of things," to international relations. Marx and Fukuyama "are basically saying the same thing," Huntington wrote in *The National Interest* "and, most importantly, they are thinking the same way."

Of course, Fukuyama's view of international relations, like his view of contemporary capitalism, is highly speculative. He brushes aside liberation battles in the Third World, along with religious wars and the potential for highly contentious economic rivalries in the First World with the same aplomb that he dismisses poverty and unemployment in American capitalism. But while Fukuyama's economic views are fanciful, his dissident view of international relations justifies the fleeting attention his essay has received.

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By Jim Wurst

UNITED NATIONS

FOR YEARS STRATEGIC NUCLEAR WEAPONS have topped the superpowers' arms-control agenda. But only days after a breakthrough on that issue, banning chemical weapons has taken the top spot.

The U.S. and the USSR gave the issue new momentum over a five-day period, beginning with a September 24 meeting between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and concluding with speeches by Shevardnadze and U.S. President George Bush before the United Nations General Assembly.

Domestic U.S. politics may have played a large role in the sudden interest in chemical weapons (CWs). In recent weeks members of Congress, editorial writers and even the Soviets complained about Bush's sluggish arms-control agenda. The Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) were stalled because of procedural disagreements within the Bush administration. So when Shevardnadze came to Washington with a new proposal to leave aside the contentious issue of Star Wars, it was clearly meant to prod negotiations forward. Shifting focus onto a secondary issue like chemical weapons might have been the best way for Bush to proceed on arms control without risking a fight within his administration.

After their Jackson, Wyo., meeting, Baker and Shevardnadze issued two joint statements, one on arms control and one dealing exclusively with CWs. The latter, entitled the Memorandum of Understanding, calls for the exchange of CW data and on-site verification inspections. The first stage could begin by year's end. The results of the U.S.-USSR exchange will be submitted to the 40-nation Geneva Conference on Disarmament, which is negotiating the global CW ban.

Chemical admissions: Lee Feinstein, a senior research analyst at the Arms Control Association in Washington, said that because of the agreement the U.S. will finally have to declare the size of its chemical stockpile, generally estimated at 30,000 tons. The agreement should also settle the question of the size of the Soviet arsenal. Early this year Moscow admitted it possessed at least 50,000 tons of chemical agents. Yet some Western estimates put the Soviet supply as high as 300,000 tons. Others, however, have charged that such a high figure could have been reached only by including the weight of the weapons' casings.

The day after the memorandum was issued, Bush outlined his new plan in an address to the United Nations. He said the U.S. will begin immediate destruction of "more than 80 percent of our stockpile—even as we work to complete a treaty—if the Soviet Union joins us in cutting chemical weapons to an equal level." He also said the U.S. would destroy 98 percent of its stockpile during the first eight years of a CW treaty, "provided the Soviet Union joins the ban," and promised the entire U.S. stockpile would be destroyed within 10 years "once all nations capable of building chemical weapons sign the total ban treaty."

Bush's proposal was not as dramatic as it seemed. Critics were quick to charge Bush with "making virtue out of necessity." The Bush administration is bound by federal law to destroy most of the old CW stockpile by 1997, and the 10-year time frame for destruc-



'THAT'S NICE, GEORGE.'

U.S., Soviets push for chemical arms curbs

tion is already part of the treaty being negotiated in Geneva. Bush also failed to mention that the U.S. is now producing binary weapons—which are activated by combining two relatively harmless components into a lethal mix—and has done so since it ended an 18-year unilateral halt in 1987. The Soviet Union announced that same year that it had stopped producing CWs. While the total production goal is classified, 6,000 tons is a common estimate. "It looks as if the U.S. would not have to destroy binary weapons to stay under the 20 percent ceiling" proposed by Bush, Feinstein said, since upon destruction of old stockpiles the more advanced binary weapons would replace them under the ceiling.

The condition of retaining some CWs as long as any other country might be capable of producing their own CWs could cause problems, Feinstein said. He called it "a new condition" and suggested that the wording of Bush's speech could imply that any country with a reasonably well-developed chemical industry is "capable of producing CWs." The U.S. estimates that more than 20 countries are capable of producing chemical weapons. This supposed capability could be used by the U.S. as a loophole to escape treaty provisions regarding stockpile destruction.

Objectionable elements: The USSR also objected to elements of the Bush plan. Deputy Foreign Minister Victor Karpov said linking the treaty's success to the U.S. interpretation of one country's motives "will be difficult to swallow." Karpov, one of the Soviet Union's leading arms-control experts, also criticized the U.S. binary program, saying, "It would not be sufficient to get rid of old stockpiles while piling up new ones." A production halt would have to be part of a bilateral agreement on CW destruction, he said, stopping short of saying such an agreement would be impossible if the binary program continued.

The controversies over timetables and stockpiles obscured another, potentially groundbreaking feature of the Bush plan. After listing his three steps, Bush said, "We know that monitoring a total ban on chemical weapons will be a challenge. But the knowledge we've gained from our recent

arms-control experience ... makes me believe we can achieve the level of verification that gives us confidence to go forward with the ban."

Feinstein called this statement "a strong endorsement of the ability to verify an international CW agreement." Insisting on perfect rather than adequate verification is a traditional method of undermining treaty negotiations, so Bush's statement implies this may no longer be a problem with a CW ban.

Shevardnadze agreed to the core of the U.S. plan but rejected the qualifying elements. "The Soviet Union is ready, together with the United States, to go further and assume mutual obligations prior to the conclusion of a multilateral treaty," he said. His proposal to "radically reduce or completely destroy Soviet and U.S. chemical weapons" called for a bilateral halt in CW production and a renunciation of the use of such weapons "under any circumstances."

The day after Shevardnadze's speech, Bush said the U.S. would not agree to a total,

Developing countries are wary of any plan requiring them, but not the superpowers, to ban chemical weapons.

unconditional destruction of superpower CW stockpiles because some weapons would be needed for deterrence against a third country's CW potential. This goes to the heart of a bilateral vs. multilateral approach to arms control. While the superpowers make their own arrangements, 149 nations backed a quick CW ban at the Paris conference on chemical weapons in January. But the more industrialized developing countries in particular are suspicious of any arrangement that would codify superpower stockpiles while requiring Third World countries to ban CWs. This is why the Geneva negotiations are working toward a total ban

on CW production and stockpiling. Bush's condition linking retention of a limited U.S. stockpile to other countries' production will simply reinforce those concerns.

This was an issue at the Paris conference, where the U.S. suggested that non-proliferation of CWs should take precedence over a ban (see *In These Times*, Jan. 18 and 25). "The greatest fear of the developing countries is that the convention is to be yet another non-proliferation instrument, creating two classes of states, one consisting of the 'responsible' developed countries who already have the capacity and the stockpiles, and whose interests would somehow be legitimized, and the other consisting of those 'irresponsible' developing countries who do not have either the capacity or the stockpiles, and who are merely being asked to acquiesce in this discrimination," said Ahmad Kamal, Pakistan's ambassador to the Geneva talks.

Third World countries also fear a system that would stifle legitimate non-military chemical developments. The Geneva conference is grappling with the question of separating legitimate needs from illegitimate desires.

Bush's and Shevardnadze's easy talk about stockpile destruction overlooked another problem: neither country is destroying its CWs because facilities are lacking and public protests about toxic byproducts have arisen. In September, Moscow halted work on its only facility for the destruction of CWs, located near Chapayevsk, because of local opposition to the plan.

Just days before Baker and Shevardnadze met in Wyoming, Greenpeace released a study sharply critical of a U.S. Army plan to incinerate old chemical weapons at Johnston Atoll in the South Pacific. The study charges that the Army plan does not adequately account for the toxic wastes that would result from incinerating CWs. Greenpeace says toxic matter—the CWs themselves or their waste—could enter the water or air, with tragic results. The Johnston site is the only furnace for U.S. wastes that is anywhere near completion; the next planned site, in Toole, Utah, will not be ready until at least 1992.

Nuclear debris: The chemical weapons issue became so important to the Bush administration that the president, in his address to the U.N., squeezed all other pressing arms-control issues into two sentences: "The Soviet Union removed a number of obstacles to progress on conventional and strategic arms reductions. We reached agreements in principle on issues from verification to nuclear testing." He never even used the phrase "nuclear weapons."

In contrast, Shevardnadze dedicated much of his speech to a range of multilateral disarmament issues high on the U.N. agenda. He restated the Soviet commitment to a comprehensive nuclear test ban, saying, "The USSR is ready to reinstate its moratorium on all nuclear explosions any day and hour, if the United States reciprocates." Shevardnadze also spoke of "an urgent need for a verifiable cessation of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes," and called for negotiations on cutting tactical nuclear weapons and naval forces.

The United States favors none of these proposals. □

Jim Wurst is a New York reporter specializing in disarmament and security issues.

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IN SHORT

By Joel Bleifuss

Iran-contra cover-ups

This past summer, the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee opened a secret investigation into the Iran-contra affair, examining what different federal agencies knew about the scandal and when they knew it. In four recent columns, Stewart Harris, an associate of Jack Anderson, reports that the Senate committee was told by a former CIA desk officer that the agency knew about a September 1985 shipment of U.S. TOW anti-tank missiles to Iran days after the missiles arrived there. Bruce Hemmings, a 17-year CIA veteran who in 1985 was assigned to the Iran desk, told the committee that FBI agent Randall Boone called in late September or early October 1985 to tell him the FBI had discovered that missiles had been illegally shipped to Iran. Hemmings said he was then ordered by his superiors to tell the FBI to keep its discovery quiet since the shipment was a part of a "White House operation."

Mis-Ledeen: Hemmings' revelations throw into doubt the previously accepted chronology of who in the Reagan-Bush administration knew what about the Iran arms deal and when they knew it. If it is true that the CIA knew of the Iran arm sales in September 1985, that means administration officials lied to Congress in an apparent attempt to cover up CIA knowledge of the affair. Administration officials previously have led the Iran-contra committees to believe that the CIA did not find out about the Iran arms deals until November 1985. In his testimony before the Iran-contra committees, former National Security Council (NSC) consultant Michael Ledeen swore that the NSC told the late CIA Director William Casey of the arms shipments on November 14, 1985, at a meeting with then-National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane.

Webster of deceit: As Harris writes in the October 5 Anderson column, "[Then-FBI Director William] Webster's confirmation hearings [for directorship of the CIA] started one month before the Iran-contra hearings opened in May [1987]. The last thing the CIA wanted was to disclose its earlier-than-admitted knowledge about the arms shipments." Desk officer Hemmings told the Senate committee that as a preparation for the confirmation hearings, he was instructed by his CIA superiors to write a classified memo describing the call from FBI agent Randall. In his memo, Hemmings related how he had been ordered to tell the FBI that the arms shipments were a "White House operation." Hemmings told the Senate committee that his superiors exploded when they read his memo, but that they then solved the problem by sending a censored version of it to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, which was going to question Webster. In April 1987, Webster told a closed hearing of the Senate intelligence committee about the FBI's September 1985 discovery. But Webster said he did not know about the shipments until later because no one in the FBI told him about them. The FBI still maintains that Webster and others in the bureau's top command knew nothing about the arms delivery because lower-level officials decided that the illegal shipment of missiles to a "terrorist" nation was not worth reporting. Although Congress had asked the CIA to turn over all relevant documents, the Hemmings memo was never given to the Iran-contra committees.

Selective intelligence: It has yet to be explained why the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence did not share what it learned during the Webster hearing with the Iran-contra committees—especially since Sen. David Boren (D-OK) and Sen. William Cohen (R-ME) sat on both committees. The Governmental Affairs Committee is no longer investigating the matter because the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence took over the investigation when it learned of Hemmings' damning testimony.

Policing the CIA: Possibly prodded by the investigation by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, committee member Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA) introduced legislation that would give the president the power to hire and fire the CIA inspector general—the person charged with investigating internal wrongdoing at the agency. Currently the CIA inspector general works at the pleasure of the director of the CIA.

A pro and a con: Bruce Hemmings is no longer a CIA employee. After writing the memo that caused his superiors so much discomfort, he was demoted to a position with no responsibilities and later resigned from the agency. Hemmings is among those supporting Specter's proposal. As he told Harris, "In the area of intelligence, there is no mechanism available to an employee or



Artists Photo Service/Frank Strykowski

Down and art. "This is not another 'starving artist' sofa-sized sale as held in suburban motels, but rather a serious look at the images, ideas, and thoughts of impoverished artists," says Mike Sered, organizer of *Brushed Aside*, an art exhibit of paintings, sculptures, crafts and poetry by Chicago's homeless, poverty-stricken and street-talented artists. Shown here is "Tired," a painting by Kathryn Manders, a 54-year-old disabled artist who lives in a residential hotel. "I was trying to show the hopelessness that homeless people feel," says Manders. "How do you get a start if you have nothing to start with? I know the fear and depression. I almost ended up on the street." The exhibit runs October 14 and 15 from 12 noon to 5 p.m. at Peoples Church of Chicago, 941 W. Lawrence Ave..



Port of call. The *Rainbow Warrior*, in its second incarnation, is on the seas again. The 184-foot Greenpeace vessel, a converted North Sea trawler, recently docked in New York on its journey to the Pacific Ocean, where its 11 crew members will continue their work against environmental wasters and nuclear testers. The original *Rainbow Warrior* was bombed in New Zealand by the French secret service on July 10, 1985. Greenpeace photographer Fernando Pereira was killed. New Zealand convicted and sentenced two of the bombers to 10 years in jail. Since then, France, violating a U.N.-mediated agreement under which the agents would have served a reduced sentence on a French atoll in the South Pacific, has brought the agents back to France, where they were set free.

Bad-mouthing Mother Russia's tongue

Amid virulent anti-Russian demonstrations in August, Moldavia declared Moldavian the official language of the land. With food queues, cramped housing and tacky clothing to complain about, the people in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Tadzhik-

istan are rioting over language.

Not surprisingly, the intensity of the demonstrations reflects the very real stakes that are won or lost on the linguistic playing field. Language is more than a means of communication—it is a capital asset. The new language laws are expressions of both anti-Soviet feelings and ethnic nationalism. But underlying the current language struggles is an even fiercer battle for economic and polit-

ical power.

Moldavians were never denied the right to use their language. The Soviet Constitution guarantees that right to all Soviet citizens. Russian never has been the Soviet Union's official language. Only in the last year have any official languages been decreed; ironically, all of them in the non-Russian republics.

Russian enjoys greater prestige than any other language in the USSR.

c 15 3 E-via Vita

Its power—and the power of those who speak it—derives from its special status as the only language used throughout the Soviet Union. Russian, as it had been during the previous empire, is the designated language for interpublic discourse.

Comrades born in the Russian republic never had to master a second language. Since the 19th century, Moscow has sent Russian administrators to live and work throughout its dominion. Along with their samovars, they carried their language. Most spoke no other regional language, so Russian crept into the local language scene from Estonia to Azerbaijan. (Of course, in the 19th century French was the language of the Russian elite.) Worker migrations from other republics reinforced the use of Russian as a common language. In some areas, Russian speakers came to outnumber the native population. Since the locals also knew some Russian, it became the lingua franca of local intercourse.

By reserving a special space for Russian in the years after the revolu-

tion, Soviet law in effect has spawned, over time, two separate and unequal networks for communication. The first network, based in the Russian Republic, had branch offices throughout the Soviet Union. The second, a babel of local languages, was restricted to the provinces. Before long, the first encroached on the second, little by little overwhelming it until, inexorably, Russian's de facto reign became de jure.

Practical considerations further ushered in a policy of language dominance. The Soviet Union needed specialists who could work in any region of the country. That meant Russian-speaking technocrats. By the late '70s, Russian was the official language of instruction in many disciplines in universities across the country.

At about the same time, and for similarly practical reasons, Russian was introduced in pre-schools across the country. The rationale was to help non-Russians compete in a Russian-dominated job market. Of course, no one—at least in Mos-

cow—thought Russians should have to learn a second language. After all, didn't everyone worth talking to speak Russian?

Now, *glasnost* and *perestroika* have eroded the social and economic underpinnings of the Russian language throne. Market decentralization, local planning and greater freedom of expression lessen the need for interpublic communication and favor the growth of local language networks. One after another, various republics have elevated their languages to official status. Some, like Moldavia, still allow workers from other republics to use Russian for official purposes; others, such as Estonia, require all immigrants to speak Estonian within four years after arriving.

Monolingual Russians are about to lose their privileges. And, in a futile attempt to halt the onslaught of linguistic nationalism, many have taken to the streets or have gone on strike to protest the militant new multilingualism now engulfing them.

—Hubert Devonish & Nan Elsasser

Colombia takes hit as coffee prices plunge

At the same time the Bush administration has pressured Colombia to devote more resources to fighting the cocaine barons, Washington has stood by and watched the collapse of the price of coffee, Bogota's leading legal export.

This latest show of U.S. indifference unfolded during the most recent meeting of the London-based International Coffee Organization (ICO). Since 1962 the ICO has periodically brought coffee producers and consumers together to establish minimum and maximum prices and to agree on quotas to support those prices.

The International Coffee Agreement, which the 74-nation ICO orchestrates, has never been trouble-free. But the downward spiral of coffee prices that followed the July 3 collapse of the accord was unprecedented. The 21 coffee-consuming nations and 50 coffee-producing countries were unable to agree on new quotas, and so the new accord contained none. The cartel deteriorated into a monitoring group that only tracked coffee sales.

Prices went into a free fall, plunging from nearly \$1.20 to 72 cents a pound, the lowest in real terms since the '30s. They have since recovered to about 80 cents a pound.

Bitter Colombians blame the collapse on the U.S. Bogota's chief negotiator, Nestor Osorio, told the *New York Times* that the U.S. was "very determined not to have an agreement."

Public reaction in Colombia, which depends on coffee for 30 percent of its export receipts, was vitriolic. *El Tiempo*, a mainstream Bogota daily, ran an editorial cartoon equating the reported hanging of Col. William Higgins in Lebanon to what the paper



viewed as U.S. scuttling of the pact. And in a letter to the editor, a reader asked why was it that Disneyland charged nearly twice as much for Coca-Cola as it did for coffee.

The 30 to 40 percent price plunge could cost the 50 producing countries \$4 billion annually, with Colombia losing some \$300 to \$400 million, says Milton Anderson, an economist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

After an initial refusal to work on rebuilding the pact, President George Bush agreed to help restore the accord following a personal plea from Colombian President Virgilio Barco.

Colombia is not the only country affected. Mexico's coffee revenues will likely drop by \$195 million, and Central America's earnings will decline by some \$713 million.

U.S. coffee importers have never liked the pact for the simple reason that it kept the price of coffee up. But they were especially angered by producers who sold excess coffee stocks for up to 40 percent below

market prices to non-ICO members, including Israel, South Africa, the Soviet Union and other East bloc countries. The business weekly *Barron's* estimated that non-cartel transactions accounted for between 15 and 20 percent of coffee exports.

While most exporting countries violated the agreement to some extent, Mexico, Kenya and some Central American countries whose production has increased but whose quotas had remained unchanged were responsible for most of the flagrantly discounted sales. Anderson says. Colombia and Brazil, the two leading exporters, generally adhered to the pact.

U.S. importers have also complained that the quotas did not include enough of the milder arabica bean, especially from Colombia. Central America and Mexico where the best arabica is grown.

The National Coffee Association, which represents U.S. importers, said that the pact should be scrapped. Prior to the collapse of the International Coffee Agreement, the association—which, according to its president, George Boecklin, provides "industry advisers to the U.S. government"—argued that "the coffee industry and coffee consumers would be best served by a free market."

Boecklin's group is not pleased by talk of reviving the agreement. "We're telling [the U.S. government] that the problems that existed in the old agreement have to be solved. We are not in favor of an agreement per se," he says.

Boecklin also rejects President Barco's argument that Washington should help strengthen the Colombian economy so it can better battle the cocaine barons. Barco points out that \$24.5 million in aid does not compare to the loss of \$300 million in coffee revenues or the gutting of an industry dominated by 500,000 small growers.

—Diane K. Bartz

ex-employee to address ... allegations of impropriety." CIA Director William Webster is among those who don't like Specter's proposal. The *New York Times's* Stephen Engelberg reports that Webster is "strongly opposed" to the idea of an independent inspector general and that the CIA "is mounting a determined drive to defeat" the proposal.

The war on druguerillas

The militarization of the war on drugs is raising justifiable concerns that the U.S.—now that it has established a beachhead in Honduras—has shifted its imperial sights south. Three months before President George Bush conjured up his drug war under the blaze of media spotlights, Michael Skol, an official at the State Department's Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, had some candid things to say about drug-war strategy. In a June 7 statement before the House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control, Skol said: "As we formulate national and international narcotics policies for the '90s, the U.S. government must work with its friends and allies in South America to develop creative new ways to attack the powerful criminal organizations, enriched by the narcotics trade, which seek to erase the values we all cherish ... we are requesting \$20 million [in military assistance to Colombia] in fiscal year '90. These funds will allow the Colombians to continue their aggressive pursuit of the traffickers and guerrillas. The administration's fiscal year '90 request for security assistance for Peru and Bolivia also are consistent with this approach. ... [M]ilitary forces can be useful in destroying labs and seizing drugs, [but] there are other reasons why militaries must get involved in the war against drugs. One is the narco-guerrilla connection." Skol goes on to say that the "narco-guerrilla connection" is strongest in Colombia, where the country's largest guerrilla movement, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), is bankrolled by the drug trade. This is nonsense. It has been repeatedly documented that the drug lords use their private armies as much to kill members of the leftist Patriotic Union Party as to protect the drug trade. (See *In These Times* February 8.) Continuing with his statement, Skol emphasizes again and again the threat posed by South American guerrilla movements. "Another reason for more military involvement is that it is needed to provide security against guerrillas while the police carry out law enforcement functions. ... If the militaries are not able to reduce the guerrilla threat to a certain level and are unable to come to the assistance of police units which encounter guerrillas, the police could be reduced to never leaving their stations. ... [D]rugs are a transnational problem that requires international cooperation at an unprecedented level," he said. Of course, a war against South America's guerrilla movements is harder to sell to the American people than a war against drugs. Apparently the administration realizes this. In his September 5 declaration of war against drugs, the president didn't mention guerrillas once, but he did say, "Our strategy allocates more than a quarter of a billion dollars for next year in military and law enforcement assistance for the three Andean nations of Colombia, Bolivia and Peru."

Senator North

Is Lt. Col. Oliver North considering a run for a Virginia Senate seat? Richard Delgado, president of the conservative Legal Affairs Council (LAC), wants North in Congress. He told *Washington Times* reporter Valerie Richardson, "There was a discussion at yesterday's [September 23] meeting of the Legal Affairs Council about starting a draft Oliver North for the U.S. Senate [campaign.]" The LAC raised about \$300,000 to help pay North's legal fees. When asked by the *Washington Times* if he has his eye on the Senate, North said only, "I don't rule anything out." But out on the stump North gives the appearance that he is running for something. At a recent "Family Salute to Oliver North" picnic for 500 in Chantilly, Vir., North spoke about "pro-family values" and tuition tax credits. And he told his supporters to beware the Democrats' "liberal hot tub," for it contains "every anti-life, anti-business, pro-big government goosey-touchy-feely group you can think of."

News clips, memos, press releases, reports, anecdotes, raw gossip—send them all to "In Short," c/o *In These Times*, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647. Please include your address and phone number.

By Salim Muwakkil

Blacks call for reparations to break shackles of the past

EARLY NEXT YEAR REP. JOHN CONYERS (D-MI) will introduce legislation authorizing a study to determine the damage done to African-Americans by 250 years of slavery and the subsequent deprivations of Jim Crow, and to recommend remedies. Widely dubbed the "reparations bill," the legislation will make official the growing consensus among black leadership—spurred in part by the Supreme Court's flight from racial justice—that issues of U.S. racism must be framed in a broader historical context.

Conyers' draft legislation makes no specific demands for reparations; instead it urges the U.S. to openly acknowledge slavery's evil and to form an interracial commission to examine its legacy. The bill was inspired by the August 1988 law awarding \$20,000 in reparations to each of the surviving Japanese-Americans imprisoned in concentration camps during World War II. That legislation was legitimized by a federal study that determined how the internment damaged those Japanese-Americans affected.

"We want a congressional commission to gather material together about the most brutal and fundamental injustice in our nation's history," Conyers explains. "We want to calmly assess the impact of slavery—not only on African-Americans as a people but on us as a nation—and make recommendations to the federal government about what appropriate remedies should be taken."

The Nation of Islam, the Republic of New Africa and other more extreme elements of the black movement have long demanded reparations for slavery—usually in the form of land—but in recent years the idea has caught on among a wider range of leadership. Jesse Jackson, for example, has been in the forefront of current discussion of the issue, and several church-based groups have also endorsed the concept. While these newer claims are less grandiose than the demands of the radicals, they share the same logic: the damage done to African-Americans must be systematically repaired.

William Owens, a Massachusetts state senator, introduced a bill last December that would form a commission to negotiate reparations payments by the commonwealth to "people of African descent." In April of this year, Detroit's city council unanimously passed legislation urging Congress to create a \$40 billion reparations program that would fund college scholarships and other education for all African-American students.

The reparations issue is raised at virtually every gathering of black activists these days. At last April's African-American Summit, the concluding document included this passage: "We call for reparations. If they are good enough for the Japanese-Americans and Native Americans, they are good for those of us who worked for hundreds of years unpaid, and who now need that capital ... for our own development in this country."

Perilous freedom: Although the demand for reparations has acquired a radical tinge, the idea is nothing new. During the Reconstruction era, Congress heatedly debated but ultimately defeated the proposal to award freed slaves "40 acres and a mule." Even ardent segregationists understood the cruel injustice of setting slaves free without the means to survive. Freedom was a perilous thing for those former slaves who had been



Rep. John Conyers (D-MI) is calling for a study to examine slavery's legacy.

prohibited from learning to read or otherwise acquainting themselves with the customs and culture of the people who once enslaved and still despised them.

"The amazing thing is that we survived at all," says Maulana Karenga, director of the Institute of Pan-African Studies in Los Angeles and a longtime reparations advocate. "We can find no other people in history

would listen."

Not many listened to Jenkins in those days; his determined, almost monomaniacal commitment to the reparations idea led some to cast him as a bit of a crank, and he seldom was taken seriously. Even though he literally wrote the reparations bill that recently passed in Detroit, many still regard him as a rather eccentric advocate.

"He may not be well versed in the art of public relations and he lacks a certain amount of media eloquence, but his determination will soon force the entire nation to deal with his issue," notes Michael Wimberly, a reporter for the black-owned *Michigan Chronicle*, who has followed the reparations issue from Jenkins' desk to the congressional docket. Conyers' draft legislation bears little resemblance to Jenkins' bill, but most observers trace the 13-term congressman's leadership on the issue to the persistent urgings of his dogged lieutenant.

When the issue was first raised last year, following the vote on Japanese-American reparations, Rep. Mervyn Dymally (D-CA) was identified as the probable point man. It was generally assumed that since he co-sponsored the legislation authorizing Japanese-Americans reparations, he would be a natural to spearhead similar action on behalf of African-Americans.

"At first, because of the response of black citizens to the Japanese-American reparations bill, several members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), including Dymally, expressed an interest in drafting some sort of position paper on similar legislation for African-Americans," says Amelia Parker, head of the CBC's Washington office. Blacks had generally supported the bill but were distressed that the CBC failed to push for action on reparations for slavery. "There was no coordination of these attempts, so we had to decide to let one member take the lead and develop legislation that all the other members could support," Parker said.

Savvy constituents: Since Conyers' constituents had demonstrated such a level of expertise on the issue, the Detroit legislator

was selected to lead the way. The African-American Reparations Committee, a Detroit-based group headed by Cindy Owens—the wife of the state senator who introduced the Massachusetts bill—and including Jenkins and many other interested parties, provided the congressman with invaluable assistance.

"Members of the reparations committee are extremely knowledgeable about the issue, and they have directed us to the proper research materials that would help make our case," explains Jamila Shabazz, a Conyers aide. "Some have specific expertise in preparing legislation, so their assistance in that area has also been helpful. They are a tremendous community resource."

In the face of legislation granting reparations to Japanese-Americans, and various treaties (although frequently broken) with Native American nations, the legitimacy of compensation for slavery—certainly this country's ugliest moral stain—seems unsailable. The social dislocations that so plague the urban underclass seem clearly to stem from the monumental deprivations of the slave experience.

But critics of reparations for black Americans argue that these descendants of slaves are—for reasons mostly technical—less deserving than those other groups. What's more, they add, any attempt to award such reparations would result in a logistical and political nightmare. For instance, would the descendants of free blacks be eligible? What about the descendants of blacks from other areas of the world? How would these differences be distinguished?

"Neither the victims nor the perpetrators of the injustice are living," wrote David Ellen in a recent *New Republic* article on the issue. "This sharply distinguishes black reparations both from the Wartime Relocation Act (involving Japanese-American reparations) and from the reparations West Germany still pays Israel and concentration camp survivors."

And because "the government did not commit or compel slavery; it merely allowed it," Ellen wrote, the government should not be liable for reparations. Beyond these technical objections—which Conyers dismisses as irrelevant—Ellen noted that the very idea of reparations "reinforces the feeling of victimization that has been so counterproductive to black progress."

Ellen has apparently concluded that "feelings of victimization" are more harmful to black progress than were three and a half centuries of actual victimization under chattel slavery and legally institutionalized racism. Such skewed reasoning often infects the arguments of those so intent on maintaining the scope of slavery's malevolence they somehow wind up blaming the victims.

Ellen further contended that arguments for reparations are divisive because they are "almost custom-made to fuel racial resentment on the part of whites." He noted nothing of blacks' resentment about how this country's racist past set the stage for the deteriorating conditions of the present and the depressing portents of the future.

"I find it absolutely incredible that we're just beginning to rationally discuss the impact of that inhumane institution that has cast such a large and malicious shadow over our entire history," Conyers says. But our present racial impasse cannot be understood, he believes, until we take a serious and unflinching look into our racist past. □

BLACK AMERICA

who were subjected to more sustained and systematic cruelty."

Conyers contends that the legacy of that brutal history remains all around us. "We see that legacy in every major American city with Third World statistics in infant mortality, health and employment," he says. "When we are entertained in the media by the sight of so many young black men with their heads down during drug busts, we see it."

Why the sudden popularity of a notion once considered too radical for most blacks to contemplate? "I think that black people just finally woke up to see what was really happening," says Ray Jenkins, a longtime Detroit activist credited as the prime mover behind Conyers' bill.

Other observers say the Supreme Court's recent rulings against affirmative action spurred this new direction. "With the backward direction of the top court, many of us now realize that we need a broader historical context from which to argue our case for affirmative action," says Craig Ford, a Chicago-based civil rights attorney. "Crafting arguments for reparations presents that broader context."

Jenkins says his interest in the subject was sparked in 1967 when he read of a treaty agreement between the U.S. and Sioux Indians. "Then I started researching what the Aborigines received in Australia, the Jews in Israel, and even what the Chippewa Indians of Michigan received. I couldn't understand why black Americans, who had been treated worse than all of them, received nothing. I complained to just about everyone who

Chicago pushes reform to grass roots

By David Moberg

CHICAGO

THE CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, THE third largest and possibly "worst" in the nation, begins an unprecedented experiment in radical decentralization and democratization this week with the election of 10 representatives to each of 540 new Local School Councils.

If the experiment works, much of the power of the central school administration and the school board will be shifted to the councils—comprised mostly of parents—and to local principals and teachers. Parents and community residents are expected to become more involved in each school's performance. Schools and teachers will be allowed to respond flexibly and creatively to the needs of their students.

Local control and accountability, it is hoped, will help reverse the school system's disastrous performance. One study by Designs for Change, a school reform advocacy group, concluded that only 15 percent of Chicago's 1980 public high school freshmen graduated four years later capable of reading at the national twelfth-grade average. The failure rate was even greater among the two-thirds of students who attended non-selective, segregated high schools: only 8 percent finished with competence equal to the average graduating senior.

Once a leader in urban education and heavily influenced by the teachings of John Dewey, the Chicago public-school system slid downward in the '30s as the Democratic machine brought endemic corruption, patronage and strongly centralized control. Middle-class whites fled the city for the suburbs after World War II, and many remaining ethnic white working-class parents chose the Catholic parochial school system. The late Mayor Richard J. Daley and his school minions desperately fought desegregation of schools while depriving the growing black majority of its fair share of power and resources. Now Chicago's schools are 60 percent black, 23 percent Hispanic and 14 percent white, even though the city's population is about 42 percent white and 40 percent black and 13 percent Hispanic.

Business as usual: Black demands for a proportionate voice in controlling the schools were long rebuffed. But the black superintendents of the '80s retained the old centralized bureaucratic style. Some black politicians saw reform as a plan to undermine blacks who had power over contracts and high-paying jobs. Last summer, Jesse Jackson and several other black leaders fought to retain Superintendent Manford Byrd, even though he had proven as incompetent as his white predecessors and was a staunch opponent of reform.

In 1979 the schools effectively went bankrupt and were put under supervision of an outside financial monitor. Fiscal crises and strikes became commonplace. It finally took a 19-day teacher strike in 1987, provoked by Byrd and a school board that lied about available money, to bring widespread parental discontent with the schools to a head. The late Mayor Harold Washington then shifted from his hands-off strategy of keeping politics out of education and became a champion of school reform shortly before he died. Although some black leaders took an active role in advocating school reform,

a coalition of non-profit groups backed by business money and clout pushed it through the state legislature in 1988.

The reform law establishes Local School Councils (LSCs) composed of six parents, two community representatives, two teachers and the school principal. The LSCs will draw up school improvement plans, set broad policy goals, approve budgets and place the principal under a four-year, non-tenured "performance contract." The principal will hire teachers. Existing teachers keep tenure in their schools but not in the system as a whole, although they have job security if there are cutbacks. New teachers need not be hired by seniority, and there will be a streamlined method for ousting bad teachers.

Within the school, teachers will form a personnel advisory committee to advise on ways to improve teaching and curriculum. Some observers think these committees could be as important to changing the schools as the LSCs.

Each LSC will select a parent or community representative for new subdistrict councils, which will evaluate the work of the subdistrict superintendents and help schools cooperate with each other. A new school board will be nominated, selected by the mayor and approved by the city council. The board will hire a new superintendent with diminished direct authority. The reform law also sets a budgetary limit on central administration, which has already resulted in the elimination of about 500 positions in 2000.

"I don't think there's ever been anything like it in terms of local governance of schools," says Norm Fruchter, president of a Brooklyn district school board and senior consultant at the Academy for Educational Development. "I don't know of any other plan [with a local council] that hires and fires the principal, has a strong say in curriculum and decides the budget. Nowhere has the same level of control by the parents. The promise is you restore a level of trust in the school system that's been imperiled if not destroyed in Chicago and other big cities."

Yale professor James Comer has shown in a demonstration project he has conducted over the past 15 years that inner-city schools run by the principals, teachers and parents in a cooperative enterprise can successfully teach poor, black children. Together they plan policy and set a tone of caring, trust and social comfort for the children. Keeping parents involved is critical to the success of Comer's schools. The Chicago plan resembles Comer's efforts, except that it is being done quickly, on a grand scale and without preparation on the inner workings of a successful school.

Bad faith: Chicago's hostile central school administration is providing no support, as it waits for inevitable examples of failure. Although the teachers union lukewarmly supported the school reform law, it has not been actively training teachers in how to cooperate in school reform, favoring narrow bread-and-butter issues instead, says George Schmidt, a high school teacher and editor of *Substance*, a schools watchdog newspaper. Mayor Richard M. Daley, who endorsed school reform as his major concern, has not actively encouraged the process and has manipulated the school board and system structure to gain political power, thus feeding black paranoia. And Jesse Jackson,

who could have inspired black parents and students to participate, was at first hostile, then absent and silent.

Some school reform and community groups have trained and encouraged candidates, and there is grass-roots enthusiasm despite an absence of support from political leaders. More than 17,000 candidates have filed for the parent and community slots. Contrary to cynics' expectations, many of the most actively contested elections are in the poorest neighborhoods. But some knowledgeable observers, like Harold Baron, who directed Washington's school reform summit, think that the new reform may succeed in less than a third of the schools. But, he says, "if the reform achieves nothing else than breaking the back of the bureaucracy, that would be an enormous victory."

For more than 20 years there have been token efforts at decentralization, all stymied by an ever-expanding central administration. Such frustration, as well as business anxieties over an emerging unemployable workforce, provoked Chicago's radical school reform move. "If you phase in any-

Grass-roots community control is one of the major alternatives available as the nation tries to figure out why Johnny or Jane can't read—or count.

thing in Chicago, it will stay at the model stage," says Ted Oppenheimer, director of the long-established Citizens Schools Committee. "The overpowering bureaucracy would win."

Decentralization has had mixed results in New York, Detroit, Miami, Hammond, Ind., and other cities. But despite problems with corruption and patronage in New York, most observers think even their less-thorough decentralization has improved the schools. The Chicago plan tries to take into account the shortcomings of other decentralizations and pushes the power further down to the grass roots.

"We're the most tangible example of a place where we've gone beyond rhetoric and are trying to do something fundamentally different," says Don Moore, director of Designs for Change and one of the leading advocates of reform. "We've changed basic power relationships. We're talking about broadening of democratic and voting rights in a way that's unprecedented in a big city. I see these councils becoming a base for a level of activism in the neighborhoods around a lot of issues."

Such grass-roots, parent-community control is one of the major alternatives available as the nation thrashes about trying to figure out why Johnny and Jane can't read—or count or figure out where Europe is. Another popular strategy is increasing parental choice of schools, either with vouchers or some other mechanism. But "choice" systems turn into what Moore calls a "new improved sorting machine" that allows the schools to "pick and choose the best students rather than the parents and children

picking the schools they want." That usually leaves the schools for the majority in worse shape. And despite the use of choice mechanisms such as magnet schools to promote desegregation in cities like Chicago, the system is discriminatory and overwhelmingly benefits middle-class whites.

But choice is important when coupled with giving parents a greater direct voice. It's a way not only to satisfy students and parents but also, as Fruchter argues, to spur schools to be more creative. The Chicago plan mandates study of increasing choice, which Moore hopes will occur in the context

EDUCATION

of improving all schools. But some black reform skeptics fear that if reform seems to be faltering, there will be a concerted drive for a voucher system.

Another major school "reform" strategy in recent years has been the emphasis on "excellence," a pedagogical extension of baseball-bat-wielding New Jersey principal Joe Clark. "Excellence" advocates push tough standards, standardized testing and strict behavioral control. The strategy assumes that some kids are bound to fail, argues Susan Davenport of Designs for Change. But the community-based approach, like that of Yale's Comer, demonstrates that even the children most "at risk" can learn if the schools are changed to take their needs seriously.

Reforming reform: Other current reform strategies include increased teacher retraining programs; curriculum reform stressing a more integrated, flexible teaching of reading and writing instead of pushing mechanical mastery of fragmented "skills"; reform of the internal structures of schools to respond to different children's needs and to overcome the anonymity of huge urban schools; and more early childhood education. The Chicago plan steers away from the rigid, authoritarian "excellence" models, although it may encourage some of the other reform tendencies simply by giving teachers and schools more flexibility. But while encouraging systemwide pre-primary education, the law provides no new money to fund it.

In one important move, the law calls for the school system to spend the \$250 million state allocation for disadvantaged children on low-income students rather than spreading the money around the system as it has in the past. The expected \$40 million savings in administrative costs should prevent other schools from losing programs they have because of the redistribution. Passage of school reform also helped pry loose some additional funding from the state legislature this year.

With decaying schools and inadequate supplies, the Chicago school system will need more money. Although research shows no clear correlation between the amount of money spent and educational performance, Fruchter and Moore both argue that money well spent does make a difference. "Money has to be translated into better services for kids" if it is to have an effect, Moore says, "and we believe we've created a better mechanism."

Others argue that class size—typically around 30 students—must be reduced. Moore says reducing class size will help, but only if it is coupled with running the schools differently. And then, some research indicates, results only come in classes with fewer

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IN 'THESE' TIMES' OCTOBER 11-17, 1989 7

Protective instincts at the EPA



William Reilly: recent charges have tarnished his squeaky "green" image.

By Jim McNeill

THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA), rocked by scandal in the Reagan years, could soon be reeling again due to charges leveled against EPA Administrator William Reilly. The charges, filed on September 28 by veteran EPA whistleblowers William Sanjour and Hugh Kaufman, allege that Reilly improperly met with key officials of the waste management industry and then, in an attempt to cover up the contents of one of those meetings, lied to an investigator from the EPA inspector general's office.

Sanjour and Kaufman's allegations of possible criminal and ethical violations stem from Reilly's meetings last spring with Dean Buntrock, chief executive officer of Waste Management, Inc., the nation's largest disposal firm, and William Ruckelshaus, the two-time EPA administrator and current head of Browning-Ferris Industries (BFI), Waste Management's biggest competitor. (See accompanying story, "Quid pro quodiam.")

According to Sanjour and Kaufman, the meeting with Buntrock influenced Reilly to reopen hearings that could strip North Carolina of its authority to control hazardous waste disposal within the state. By resurrecting the North Carolina hearings, they say, Reilly has delivered a chilling message to other states considering a challenge to the commercial waste management industry.

Reilly's decision, recently condemned in a statement by five former colleagues in the

environmental establishment as a "grave misjudgment that will have significant political ... ramifications for the agency," has tar-

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nished Reilly's squeaky "green" image and refocused attention on his activities as president of the Conservation Foundation, a conservative environmental group that receives substantial donations from Waste Management, du Pont and other companies with substandard environmental records.

State fights: At issue is the EPA's attack on a North Carolina law restricting the size of a proposed hazardous waste treatment facility to be built by GSX Chemical Services, Inc. on the Lumber River in Scotland County. The proposed facility, sited less than 30 miles upstream from the water intake for 23,000 residents of Robeson County, could discharge up to 500,000 gallons of treated hazardous waste per day into the river if built and operated according to the guidelines of its EPA permit.

While the permit would prohibit GSX from dumping undiluted waste directly into the river, a loophole in federal law allows companies to dump it into local sewers instead—a loophole GSX intended to exploit at the Lumber River facility.

Although GSX expected little opposition in poor and racially divided Robeson County, the citizens downstream united to fight the facility and in 1987 persuaded state lawmakers to legislate strict dilution standards for

commercial waste handlers in North Carolina. That law effectively restricted GSX to a 72,000-gallon discharge.

But because the North Carolina law exceeded federal safety standards, GSX claimed it was too stringent and acted as a de facto ban on the plant, constituting an illegal usurpation of federal authority by state officials.

In response to the law, GSX, joined by the Hazardous Waste Treatment Council (HWTC), an industry consortium, sued the EPA in federal court in 1987. It demanded that the EPA initiate proceedings to withdraw the waste management authority granted to North Carolina by Congress under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA).

Although Congress intended the withdrawal of RCRA authority to be a last-ditch sanction against states that inadequately protected their citizens, the EPA agreed to the GSX-HWTC request, and—with a vigor that stunned the nation's environmentalists and legislators—began prosecuting North Carolina for too stringently protecting its people.

The EPA's first action against the state in 1987, initiated by EPA Southeastern Region IV Administrator Jack Ravan (who has since

left EPA for the incinerator firm Rollins Environmental Services) was eventually upended by an outraged Congress. The legislators, invoking the Bumpers Amendment to RCRA, which explicitly supports the right of all states to enact laws "more stringent than those imposed by [federal] regulations," angrily protested the agency's action to then-EPA Administrator Lee Thomas. Thomas, after postponing the North Carolina hearings twice and commissioning two task forces to study the matter, was finally convinced by agency officials and Congress to relent.

On Dec. 23, 1988, just before leaving the EPA, Thomas issued a memo addressing the RCRA issues involved without explicitly mentioning the North Carolina case. Acknowledging that the threat of RCRA withdrawal had been an impermissible bludgeon, he advised against its use in future EPA actions and dropped the North Carolina proceedings.

For the waste management industry, which faces increasing grass-roots opposition to its facilities, Thomas' decision to quit the North Carolina case was potentially disastrous.

Unholy alliance: Friends and foes of the industry agree that waste management companies rely heavily on EPA authority to overcome the community opposition it encounters when siting a waste treatment plant. And the agency, after years of promoting those plants in the face of public protest, has

William Ruckelshaus, a.k.a. cool hand lucre

Although William Ruckelshaus' principled resignation from the Nixon Justice Department earned him a saintly reputation during Watergate, it is clear that he long ago renounced any vows of chastity or poverty.

Two years after Ruckelshaus left the Nixon administration, Weyerhaeuser, the timber giant and environmental miscreant, lured him to a senior vice-presidential suite, where he remained until returning to the EPA's top post in 1983. And recent disclosures by Browning-Ferris Industries, his current corporate partner, show that Ruckelshaus earned at least \$1 million during his first year as the firm's CEO.

Although some attribute the high salary to corporate profligacy, others insist the influential ex-administrator has earned his keep. As his former Reagan administration colleagues Michael Deaver, James Watt and Lyn Nofziger have proven, influence in Washington is a precious commodity. And when it comes to influence at the EPA, few people wield more of it than Bill Ruckelshaus.

An article in the fall issue of the Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Waste magazine, *Everyone's Backyard*, reports that Ruckelshaus "urged [President] Bush to give Reilly the job at the EPA." And F. Henry Habicht, the EPA's new deputy administrator, worked at the consulting firm Ruckelshaus established after leaving the EPA in 1984.

In fact, it was a group Ruckelshaus promoted at his consulting firm—William D. Ruckelshaus & Associates—that first linked Ruckelshaus and Reilly in a mutual scandal. That group, the Coalition on Superfund (see *In These Times*, Jan. 18), represented insurance companies and manufacturing firms distraught over the retention of the joint and several liability clause in the 1986 Superfund reauthoriza-

tion bill. That clause eases the burden of proof on pollution victims seeking redress from corporate polluters.

Although the coalition's public-relations literature trumpeted the group's intention "to develop an objective, analytical base of information about Superfund," minutes from a coalition meeting, leaked in late 1987 by the Natural Resources Defense Council, suggest that the group had other intentions as well.

"Bill Ruckelshaus mentioned a conversation he had with [then-EPA Administrator] Lee Thomas wherein Mr. Thomas expressed interest in the group we are establishing 'to get rid of joint and several liability.' Other [coalition] members indicated that they too had experiences which indicated that the environmental community was becoming more aware of our activities.... Their [sic] seemed to be a consensus that maintenance of control of the information base was a critical item for the coalition."

After the meeting minutes were made public, the coalition, in the spring of 1988, attempted to restore its credibility by commissioning Reilly's Conservation Foundation to "transform the coalition's agenda of concerns into manageable and objective investigations." But that summer, with the coalition encountering a cash shortfall, the foundation study was hastily repackaged in order to qualify for \$2.5 million in EPA money.

At the Conservation Foundation, Reilly—in the face of nearly unanimous opposition from fellow environmentalists—accepted the tainted funds and allowed the foundation team to press on with the discredited EPA-coalition study. Its work was finally halted when the study's head, Terry Davies, left the foundation—for a job with Reilly in the Bush administration's transition team at the EPA. —J.M.

"I defy you to read her account... and remain impassive."

—Sir Anthony Parsons, *London Sunday Times*

From Beirut to Jerusalem

by Dr. Sweeney Chai Ang

"Dr. Ang's heart-rending account of her personal experiences in the Palestinian refugee camps (of Sabra and Shatila) in Lebanon is a story of savagery and terror, unimaginable suffering, and awe-inspiring fortitude and courage, told with simplicity and compassion...It is an impressive and important book."

— Dr. Noam Chomsky

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forged an awkward alliance with the industry it is supposed to regulate.

In a March 31 memo to Reilly warning against a resumption of the North Carolina hearings, Sanjour and Kaufman listed more than a dozen former top EPA officials whose regulatory vigilance had been rewarded, upon leaving the EPA, with lucrative careers in the waste management industry. The two urged Reilly to repudiate the "revolving door" through which those ex-officials returned to lobby their former associates in the agency and cautioned Reilly that the door was spinning in Region IV.

When Thomas, Reilly's predecessor, ruled on the North Carolina case, "he supported a free and fair democratic process" over a prejudicial bureaucratic procedure, says Velma Smith, a staffer at the Environmental Policy Institute (EPI), which has assisted North Carolina in its legal defense. "The decision preserved a citizen's ability to go to local and state government and get some environmental protection."

But HWTC general counsel David Case claims Thomas' decision had little to do with environmental protection. "He cracked under pressure from our opponents," says Case. "He refused to deal with the real issue here and punted."

For Case, the real issue was North Carolina's unwillingness to accept its fair share of hazardous waste. "By passing the law," he says, "North Carolina made it impossible to operate profitably ... effectively blocking the siting of any facilities in the state."

The EPI's Smith disagrees, saying, "The law is not a prohibition." Rather it brings "GSX closer to the 45,000-gallon average ... [which the EPA estimates to be] the standard size for similar facilities in the U.S." Given the

facilities. "Without these facilities," says Case, "there will be no means for adequately disposing of the nation's considerable waste stream."

Capacity for conflict: Environmentalists cite recent EPA studies, however, that contradict Case's claims of an imminent crisis in capacity. A 1987 EPA survey of commercial hazardous waste firms found that most companies reported no capacity shortfalls, while "several incineration firms report that their backlogs are down appreciably and that they are having trouble soaking up increased capacity already in place."

In light of this and other EPA data, the National Toxics Campaign Fund (NTC) has proposed that local, state and federal governments institute a five-year moratorium on new incinerator and land disposal facilities. In a recently released report, the NTC says the EPA should turn its attention from promoting disposal facility siting to stemming the flow of hazardous waste at its source. The report calls on the EPA to institute a "toxics reduction" program nationwide.

The NTC's toxics reduction program would require hazardous waste generators to alter production processes, substituting non-hazardous materials whenever possible, employing safer and more efficient use of toxics when no alternatives exist and discouraging the transport of hazardous by-products to off-site treatment facilities.

The only alternative to toxics reduction, say the NTC and a growing chorus of environmental groups, is a fatal reliance on increasingly elaborate, expensive and ineffective waste management technologies. For example, the EPA currently estimates that 70 to 80 percent of all commercial landfills are leaking, posing a severe threat to humans and wildlife. And the incineration technologies the industry offer as an alternative are of questionable environmental merit, because remaining ash still must be landfilled and toxic-laden airborne emissions contribute to global warming.

Although the NTC report was greeted favorably by grass-roots environmentalists, industry advocates remain skeptical of such visionary plans. Industry skeptics, grasping at familiar straws of marketplace logic, say NTC's "burdensome" regulations would cripple companies in today's global market.

But NTC officials counter this argument with examples of companies—3M, Chevron, Borden Chemical and others—that have successfully employed toxics reduction, saving both money and lives. Statistics from the EPA's own Research Center for Waste Minimization and Management indicate that a "modest" program of toxics reduction would save waste generators more than \$25 billion a year.

Of course, included in that \$25 billion savings is a substantial chunk of the commercial waste management industry's revenues.

Breakfast of industry's champion: Concerned that such revenue reduction would be the ultimate result of Thomas' December action, GSX and HWTC again filed suit early this year against the EPA to force a resumption of the North Carolina hearings. This time the industry supplemented its legal assault with an all-out lobbying effort—sending its heaviest hitter, Buntrock, to enlighten Thomas' successor, William Reilly.

Buntrock, whose Waste Management was one of the largest corporate contributors to the Conservation Foundation during Reilly's tenure, conferred with the EPA head at a March 16 breakfast meeting. When inter-

viewed about that meeting by Jon Healey, a reporter with North Carolina's *Winston-Salem Journal*, Reilly admitted, "I was lobbied [at that breakfast] to do the very thing that we are doing."

Reilly's statement to Healey strongly supports Sanjour and Kaufman's contention that Reilly violated the following ethics provisions: "Employees ... must not ... [give] preferential treatment to any organization or person ... [or make] a government decision outside official channels."

Two days before Reilly officially announced his decision in the North Carolina case, he also met with William Ruckelshaus, a Conservation Foundation board member, Coalition on Superfund collaborator (see accompanying story, "Cool Hand Lucre"), and, by most accounts, a close friend and confidant of Reilly. While recent disclosures in the North Carolina case indicate that his decision had been finalized before this meeting, EPA insiders allege that Reilly frequently consults with Ruckelshaus on a wide range of EPA matters.

This disturbs many environmentalists, who believe Ruckelshaus, as chief executive officer of Browning-Ferris, is concerned less with protecting the environment than he is with profiting from its degradation.

Although saddled with numerous fines for thousands of environmental violations, Ruckelshaus' company's revenues have more than quintupled in the last 10 years. That growth rate, while phenomenal in most industries, is not unusual among waste management firms. To maintain that growth, Ruckelshaus and his colleagues must convince Reilly to continue the EPA's emphasis

on facility siting over toxics reduction. Reilly's decision on the North Carolina case demonstrates that he is willing to be convinced.

California bold rush: In an apparent effort to expedite the EPA proceedings against North Carolina—which are currently mired in attempts to determine the extent of the EPA's contact with industry lobbyists—the agency has shifted decision-making power to Dan McGovern, who, as administrator of Region IX, is headquartered in distant, and allegedly disinterested, California.

But Richard Regan, environmental coordinator for Robeson County's Center for Community Action (CCA), contends that this byzantine shift in responsibility will hardly affect the EPA's "objectivity." Agency documents disclosed during the trial reveal that McGovern participated in a national EPA "conference call at which," Regan says, "the issue was almost certainly discussed. Even though McGovern is in California, he knows exactly what Washington wants."

Yet even as the legality of the Reilly decision is tested in the federal courts, its premise is being upheld by the North Carolina legislature. In mid-October the state's Republican governor, Terry Martin, bowing to Region IV EPA pressure, is expected to convince lawmakers to site a 40,000-ton-a-year incinerator in the state.

CCA's Regan, who has spent the last four years successfully fighting GSX and the EPA, says he is pessimistic that the incinerator can be averted. "Frankly, legislators here are scared," he says. "The way the EPA's been treating us, they think we'll be getting off easy with just one incinerator." □

Two EPA staffers accuse Administrator William Reilly of improperly meeting with key officials of the waste management industry and then, in an attempt to cover up the contents of his meeting, lying to an investigator from the EPA inspector general's office.

profitable operation of these other, smaller facilities. Smith questions the GSX-HWTC "profitability" argument—especially since they "closed their case without offering any evidence that they couldn't operate at a profit [at the Scotland County site]."

She believes GSX and HWTC's ultimate aim is "to build their plants where they choose, how they choose and to the specs they choose. They want the right to dictate to local communities what is safe."

But GSX and HWTC refuse to yield the moral high ground to environmentalists. "[North Carolina] is not dealing responsibly with its hazardous waste," says Case. "They've blocked off their borders, and now the neighboring states are following suit." Other states—including South Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama and Kentucky—have begun to pass similar legislative restrictions on commercial waste management

Quid pro quotidian: another day at the EPA

Charges filed on September 28 by William Sanjour and Hugh Kaufman may have tipped the lid on an EPA cover-up intended to shield Administrator William Reilly from an earlier round of accusations leveled by Sanjour and Kaufman.

In those earlier charges, submitted to the EPA's inspector general last May 17, Sanjour and Kaufman accused Reilly of allowing key waste management officials to unduly influence the EPA's controversial North Carolina policy at a March 16 breakfast meeting. They cited an interview Reilly gave to the *Winston-Salem Journal* as partial proof of their charges and asked the EPA's inspector general to investigate the matter.

Although the investigation, begun on June 27, is still officially underway, a preliminary report written by inspector James F. Johnson in late August has effectively cleared Reilly of the May 17 charges.

But Sanjour and Kaufman in their September 28 memo contend that the report, which the EPA was forced to disclose last month in the North Carolina hearings, is riddled with "obvious lies and inconsistencies." They allege that the investigation did not substantively examine the original charges and was merely a whitewash.

The following is excerpted from the September 28 allegations by Sanjour and Kaufman: "In Mr. Johnson's memo [the preliminary report that allegedly cleared Reilly], Mr. Reilly, Mr. Buntrock [chief executive officer of Waste Management Inc.], Dr. Jay D. Hair [president of the National Wildlife Federation], and Mr. James Range, vice president of WMI [Waste Management Inc.], all claim that Mr. Reilly was not lobbied to reopen [the North Carolina hearings] at a

breakfast meeting [they all attended] on March 16, 1989. Yet in a newspaper interview, published in the *Winston-Salem Journal* on April 4, 1989, regarding Mr. Reilly's plans to reopen the North Carolina hearings, Mr. Reilly is quoted as saying: 'Jay Hair hosted the breakfast at which I was lobbied to do the very thing that we are doing,' and 'Jay heard all this and, I thought, agreed with what we were doing.'

"One is forced to conclude that either Mr. Reilly lied when he spoke to the reporter two weeks after the event in question, or Mr. Reilly, Dr. Hair, Mr. Buntrock and Mr. Range lied when they were interviewed by Inspector Johnson.... The latter, which appears more likely, would be a felony.... Furthermore, if all four of them did lie to the investigator, it is very likely that they conspired to do so, which would also be a felony."

John Kasper, an official EPA spokesman, calls Sanjour and Kaufman's charges, "just a little preposterous." Kasper claims that "Kaufman is well known for his conspiracy theories [and that] this one is standing on shaky ground." He accuses Sanjour and Kaufman of relying "too much on one interview [in the April 22 *Winston-Salem Journal*]" to support "charges that could seriously jeopardize a man's reputation." That interview, according to Kasper, "was just a hurried exchange of questions and answers [between Reilly] and a reporter who cornered him after some hearing on the Hill."

Jon Healey, the reporter who filed the *Journal* article, told *In These Times* that he approached Reilly after a speech at the National Press Club and conducted "a routine interview." Healey stands by his story. —J.M.

JOBS, PEACE, FREEDOM. THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES.

Michael Harrington

1928-1989



Photos from left: Bob Adelman, Bob Adelman, Gretchen Donart.

"We live today in the most radical of times; humanity is fighting at this moment over the content of that new civilization and that struggle will go on beyond the lifetime of each one of us...those who lose heart on the very eve of a new generation of change should remember the profound truth Antonio Gramsci articulated from an Italian jail cell. Socialism, Gramsci said, was not a matter of a political victory on this or that day, or even this or that decade. It was not an economic program, a recipe. It was a 'moral and intellectual reformation,' a fight to transform the very culture of those who had, since time immemorial, been made subordinate -- the epochal work, the creation of a new civilization..."

"Those who join the movement for the immediate rewards of power are advised to apply elsewhere. Those who are willing to wager their lives on the possibility of freedom and justice and solidarity should pay their dues."

Michael Harrington
In These Times
February 24, 1988

**Democratic Socialists
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The 1989 National Convention of DSA will be held in Baltimore, MD, November 10-12. Speakers to include Irving Howe, Barbara Ehrenreich, Bob Kuttner, Cornel West and James Farmer. For more information, contact DSA at 212-962-0390.

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By David Brooks

MEXICO CITY

BEFORE DAWN ON AUGUST 20, 5,000 ARMY troops descended on the Cananea copper mine in Sonora, evicted the night shift at gunpoint and occupied the installation. The state-controlled company was declared bankrupt and the labor contract annulled. Once again, the eight-month-old government of President Carlos Salinas de Gortari justified the move by claiming it was a necessary step toward modernization of the economy.

Opposition leader and ex-presidential candidate Cuauhtemoc Cardenas of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) said, "The use of troops against workers made the action comparable to that of fascist regimes." It was the second time in this century that the Cananea mine was invaded by troops. In 1906 soldiers crushed a strike against the then-U.S.-owned mine, an action that sparked the Revolution of 1910. Because of that history, Cananea, the largest mine in Mexico and the second-largest copper mine in Latin America, is a national symbol.

On September 14 independent trade unions, opposition parties, grass-roots organizations, students and citizen associations joined in a Day for the Rescue of the Nation called by the recently formed National Patriotic Front to protest the mine's takeover and to repudiate policies of a government "that is at the service of foreign interests." The front is comprised of popular organizations, parties and grass-roots movements spanning the political spectrum from liberals to the radical left with the aim of opposing the modernization strategies of the new government.

Mexico at the crossroads: As the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), the 59-year-old ruling party led by Salinas, relentlessly implements its neoliberal economic policies, Mexicans are enduring the most severe economic crisis in modern history. The government's economic remedies consist of privatizing enormous sectors of the economy, inviting massive foreign investment and producing goods for export rather than domestic consumption. The social cost of these policies includes joblessness for the majority of the workforce and a 50 percent drop in real wages since 1982, as well as widespread malnutrition, disease and illiteracy—typical results of Reaganomics in developing countries.

The PRD's formation last May was an attempt to provide a political vehicle for the civil revolt expressed during the July 6, 1988, national election. Most Mexicans believe, and detailed analyses show, that Cardenas won the presidency but the ruling party stole the vote through massive fraud. A *Los Angeles Times* poll in August revealed that 73 percent of Mexicans interviewed do not believe Salinas won the 1988 election.

Mexico has not been the same since. After taking power on December 1, Salinas accelerated the "modernization" program he designed and implemented as budget minister in the preceding administration.

Popular anger at the government, for both its illegitimacy and its austerity policies, is unprecedented since the days of the 1910 revolution. Salinas has attempted to gain a measure of credibility with spectacular arrests of drug kingpins, corrupt labor and business leaders and the alleged murderers of Mexico's most distinguished journalist. He

Mexico's 'modernization' ignites old-fashioned rage



Cardenas supporters march to the main plaza in Mexico City.

has even gone so far as to accept the victory of the rightist National Action Party in the state of Baja California—while at the same time apparently stealing the election from the Cardenistas in Michoacan. Though these

LATIN AMERICA

measures have been useful in gaining support from Washington, they have done little to slow the rise of broad opposition movements across the country.

In his home state of Michoacan, Cardenas was greeted in July by 90,000 mostly peasant supporters in the largest rally in the region's history. State congressional elections there

level. At the end of the congress 10,000 peasants from various states joined Cardenas in a march to the neighboring town of Aneneuilco to celebrate the birthday of Emiliano Zapata, the popular leader of the 1910 revolution. As peasants marched along the highway, many of them barefoot, they carried signs reading, "We are with you, Cuauhtemoc. You are the conscience of the people." A huge banner across the road at the entrance of the town read, "Welcome to Aneneuilco, Mr. President Cuauhtemoc Cardenas."

When a representative of the national PRI arrived in the town of Zitacuaro in Michoacan to join the celebration of the local PRI's

Anger at the government—for both its illegitimacy and its austerity policies—is unprecedented in Mexico since the days of the 1910 Revolution.

were rife with fraud and intimidation by the ruling party, which refused to admit defeat. Several weeks later, during a debate over election results, PRI members provoked PRD supporters to violence at a permanent sit-in in front of government offices in the state capital of Morelia. Troops were immediately called in to "install calm." In response to the provocation, PRD activists occupied 72 municipal government offices and blocked highways throughout the state for the next several days.

In the second week of August, independent peasant movements sent representatives to a special agrarian congress to talk about coordinating their strategies on a national

"electoral victory," some 6,000 peasants were assembled by PRI-controlled organizations to listen to the speech. They had been brought there in the PRI's customary manner, either by cash payment or threats to cut off government favors and services if they did not attend. The national representative concluded his speech with an attempt to lead the chant, "Viva nuestro presidente Carlos Salinas." The crowd was expected to respond "Viva." But no one responded until a peasant in the back shouted, "Viva Cuauhtemoc Cardenas." The assembled peasants then unsheathed their machetes and, raising them up high, responded, "Viva Cuauhtemoc." The PRI national representative whispered to his

local host, "It's time for lunch," and made a hasty exit.

In a similar incident, President Salinas appeared on television to triumphantly announce that a deal had been struck with the international banks concerning Mexico's debt. He asked the nation's mothers to tell their children their future will be bright. The following day children belonging to a community organization comprised of 50,000 families, the Asamblea de Barrios, appeared in front of the presidential palace in the central plaza of Mexico City and waved placards that read, "I did not understand a word my mother told me last night."

As *In These Times* went to press, five groups were staging hunger strikes in the shadow of the presidential palace. Not a day passes without news of a new protest—roads blocked by peasants demanding fair prices for their harvest, workers on strike or calling for fair treatment, human rights activists demanding the presentation of the more than 500 "disappeared" or protesting against torture and illegal detentions, students insisting on maintaining the popular character of their universities or urban movements demanding housing and city services. What is distinct from previous times in Mexico's political scene is that today diverse forces of opposition see their struggle as a common one against an anti-popular, anti-democratic government.

Last April the democratic current in the teachers' union, the largest in Mexico, called for a series of actions and, eventually, a strike. More than 500,000 teachers and supporters joined in a national rally, and the majority of the rank and file of the PRI-controlled union struck across the nation.

All but ignored by the U.S. media, it was perhaps the largest labor action in the hemisphere in recent years. The demands included democratization of the union and a pay hike. Teachers in Mexico earn an average \$250 a month. The movement successfully pressured the PRI to remove the despised union boss, and several union sections now have democratic leadership. A 25 percent initial increase in wages was negotiated.

The battle brought together enormous support from grass-roots organizations, independent trade unionists, students and urban and rural popular organizations. Parents associations also joined in support. "I love my teacher" bumper stickers appeared everywhere. Children wore T-shirts that read, "A teacher on strike is also a teacher educating."

The good, the bad and the ugly: But with the unprecedented popular mobilization there is also a dread of potential repression. According to opposition leaders, at least 50 political murders took place in the first few months of the new government, and another three PRD members were slain August 27. The government has increasingly relied on the military to implement its political decisions. More than 1,000 troops were deployed to arrest oil union boss Joaquin "La Quina" Hernandez Galicia last January. Troops again intervened in the streets of Morelia during the PRI-PRD confrontation and, most recently, occupied the Cananea mines. Government-controlled news media incessantly attack Cardenas and the PRD.

To maintain power and implement its policies in the face of such massive opposi-

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AN IMPERFECT UNITY: Three views of the intifada

By Dion Nissenbaum

SOLIDARITY AND ORGANIZATION, MANY Palestinians say, are the two factors that have fueled the *intifada* as it grinds into its second year. Stone-throwing and tire-burning, general strikes and boycotts of Israeli goods—small *intifadas*—are not new. The 1.5 million Palestinians living under Israeli occupation have used these tactics for more than 20 years. What makes this *intifada* different, they say, is the unity among all classes of Palestinians.

Residents throughout the Occupied Territories relate one story after another of food, supplies and financial and moral support flowing freely between economic classes. Sacks of food, they say, are thrown from rooftop to rooftop during a curfew until they reach the most needy in a Gaza refugee camp; a woman baking a cake delivers “the better half” to her neighbor; a wealthy resident of a West Bank village is known to give money when approached, no questions asked.

But while a common unity seems to exist, the *intifada* and the 20-year occupation have affected each class differently. What follows is a look at three families in the Occupied Territories: a wealthy Palestinian couple living in Gaza City, a large middle-class family from the city of Hebron, and a family living in the Jenin refugee camp 100 miles north of Jerusalem. All names have been changed to protect identities.

Ali Abu-Salin is a respected physician in Gaza City. He has been an outspoken advocate of Palestinian self-determination for decades. Foreign ambassadors and visiting dignitaries often make it a point to invite him for coffee and conversation. His wife directs a thriving internationally recognized day-care center at which he volunteers full time. The *intifada* has brought no discernible decrease in the couple's standard of living. Their two-story house spreads out upon a lawn kept green by a sprinkler—a surprising sight in an area where water is as much a political weapon as food is in Ethiopia and Sudan.

Perhaps because of his social status, Abu-Salin has not been arrested for his vocal support for the *intifada*, but he has sent three of his children out of the territories to complete their educations. Two of his children attend universities in the U.S., and one is enrolled in an English boarding school.

The couple employs two servants. “One is a member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP],” says Abu-Salin.

“The other is a member of the Communist Party. I would have nothing to do with either one of their groups. But they tell me I am more of a communist than some of their comrades.”

Abu-Salin's house is about a five-minute walk from the Ansar II prison complex where an estimated 1,200 Palestinians from the Gaza Strip are held under administrative detention. On the far side of Ansar II is Beach Camp, with an estimated refugee population of 41,000. Next to Hong Kong, the Gaza Strip is the most densely populated area in the world. Half a million Palestinians live in a 156-square-mile area.

Abu-Salin is building an apartment—large enough to house an entire family from a nearby refugee camp—for one of his servants. The servant is responsible for handling the couple's

“Before the *intifada*, we argued with our neighbors,” says one resident. “Now, if I knock on the wall he will come over to see if I am all right.”

two German shepherds, another strange sight in a Moslem society that considers dogs “unclean.”

“I've lost track of the reasons for the strikes,” Abu-Salin says, and he complains that the two- or three-day general strikes usually called to protest the death of a local Palestinian should be cut to one day. “One day and you've made your point,” he says.

Abu-Salin and his wife remain largely unaffected by the curfews and violence that have given the *intifada* international notoriety. A new influx of Israeli border police, intended

to cut the number of violent clashes, instead led to the killings of five Palestinians in the first two days of the new patrols.

Still, Abu-Salin speaks confidently of an equitable solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and a key U.S. role in it. He says he places great hopes in United Nations Ambassador Thomas Pickering, who gained attention when he testified to Congress that as U.S. ambassador to El Salvador he had helped Lt. Col. Oliver North resupply the Nicaraguan contras at a time when U.S. law prohibited such activities.

The Fajr family house is located in the center of the Al-Shiekh quarter of Hebron—dubbed the “Unified Leadership Quarter” during the *intifada*. The street outside the house is blackened from burning tires. The father, Jamal, has 22 children by three wives, but only a fraction of the Fajr family remains in Hebron. Many of the children have joined the Palestinian diaspora in Jordan, Saudi Arabia and other parts of the world.

The members of the Fajr family remaining in Hebron are respected for the hardships they have endured. Jamal, now in his 80s, spent five years in prison in the late '60s for his affiliation with Yassir Arafat's Fatah wing of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). One of Jamal's brothers, now in exile, is said to be a high elected official in the PLO. Jamal's 15-year-old son is serving six months in the Ansar III detention center in the Negev desert. A second son, Abdel, in his 20s, has just returned from his six-month term in Ansar III.

“We feel that we are living in a big prison,” says Abdel of life in the Occupied Territories. “During the *intifada*, waiting has become a part of life.”

It is the night before Land Day, a major protest day, and the Unified Leadership Quarter is tense and silent as houses throughout the area flicker with the reflections of burning tires.

The air is filled with the shouts of “*Allahu Akbar*” (God is great), the demonstrators' rallying cry. In the apartment, the Fajr family crowds around the television for security as well as entertainment. When Israeli soldiers enter the area, their walkie-talkies disrupt the TV signal. As soon as the screen crackles with snow, the family pulls the shades and shuts out the light.

Soon beams from the Israeli patrol's powerful flashlights glance off the windows of the darkened homes. The family members crouch below the windows, watching the patrol. Down the block voices echo off buildings as the sol-

diers try to force a woman to extinguish a burning tire. She refuses, saying, "I am here all alone with my two children. My husband is not here. Leave us alone; we have done nothing. The soldiers put out the tire themselves and continue their patrol. When the patrol leaves, the neighborhood's lights are switched back on."

A visiting neighbor, Hatem, sits and talks of a friend in prison. Hatem has never been in jail and, despite the *intifada*, still works inside Israel. And despite the boycott of Israeli goods, he still smokes Israeli-made cigarettes. Most Palestinians smoke cigarettes produced only in the territories. The Palestinian community intensely pressures its members to cut all ties with Israel, but Hatem shrugs and says he has no fears about his life. "I want to get married," he says. "And I need money—Jordanian, American, Israeli."

The Fajr family conducts an ongoing debate about the *intifada*. Surprisingly, the topic is not the Israeli government's current election proposal, which is not considered worthy of discussion. Rather it is the wisdom of the November 1988 "Declaration of Independence" of the Palestine National Council (PNC) which implicitly recognized the state of Israel.

Two of the sons argue that too much was bargained away for nothing, but a daughter defends the document, saying that the PLO was merely responding to the "will of the *intifada*." All, however, worry that Arafat must produce something tangible for the Palestinians or lose their support.

Abu-Salin's name comes up in conversation. "I've met him three times," says Nayef, a friend of the Fajr family and a working journalist in Hebron. "Before the *intifada* I respected Salin and his thoughts. But much has changed." Nayef lumps Abu-Salin with a group of high-profile Palestinians whom he fears the Israeli government will attempt to single out as an alternative leadership to the PLO. But the real leadership is in the grass roots, he says. "How many times has the Israeli government said they caught members of the Unified Leadership? But the leaflets still come out."

Jenin, 100 miles north of Jerusalem, rarely commands the same media attention as Ramallah, Bethlehem or Nablus, which are all situated closer to the Holy City. Surprisingly, the city has remained largely free from Israeli settlement, even though it rolls out upon one of the most fertile areas of the West Bank and lies less than 10 miles from the 1967 Green Line delineating the Occupied Territories. It is sometimes recalled that Arafat shuttled back and forth between Jenin and Nablus when he laid the foundations for the PLO.

Confrontations between Israeli soldiers and Palestinians are almost a ritual in the Jenin refugee camp that is located next to the city. Around 2 p.m. young boys gather, blockade the streets with stones and wait. Half an hour later, jeeps from the Israeli military complex across the road enter the camp and begin their patrol.

The Arouri house perches uneasily at the edge of a small rise in the area coined "Center Camp," where most of the major confrontations occur. The house serves as an ideal lookout spot for both Palestinians and Israeli soldiers, and pitched battles often occur for its control.

In a recent incident, 15 soldiers surrounded the house and began to throw stones, says Samir, the father. "They entered the house and told me I must bring my sons or they would kill me."

The two sons, aged 22 and 24, were beaten by the soldiers in the street. Word quickly spread, and a crowd began to form. Because of the crowd the soldiers quickly left the area. The younger son, apparently frightened and severely beaten, fled and never returned.

In 1948 most residents of Jenin Camp left Haifa, which is now Israel's third-largest city, as well as a major port and industrial center. Under the two-state solution outlined in the PNC declaration, Haifa would remain an Israeli city—a political reality many Jenin residents still cannot accept. Many Palestinians in Jenin dream of a united Palestine with the same desire that many Israelis dream of "Eretz Israel," or "Greater Israel," which would include the West Bank. Still, Jenin residents grudgingly accept the PNC declaration.

"The unity in the PLO outside the West Bank and Gaza Strip is reflected inside the Occupied Territories," says a resident of Jenin Camp. "There are many homes, and there is something shared: freedom and independence. We go with the shared."

"The shared" seems to surprise even those

doing the sharing. "Before the *intifada*, we argued with our neighbors," says a resident of Hebron. "Now, if I knock on the wall he will come over to see if I am all right."

It is difficult to pinpoint why the *intifada* has had the effect it has, both internationally and within the territories. "It is a part of our psychology now," says a resident of Jenin. "We can't live without it."

Although many Palestinians contend they can maintain the *intifada*'s momentum indefinitely, others believe the uprising will ebb without some breakthrough, perhaps before the November anniversary of the PNC declaration. Although Arafat maintains support within the PLO, many believe he could quickly fall from favor with residents of the Occupied Territories, who, after two years, have seen little political movement.

A Jenin resident admits the *intifada* may not lead immediately to a Palestinian state. "The *intifada* is one link in a chain from 1917 [when the Balfour Declaration called for a Jewish "home in Palestine"] to the present," he says. "It is not the end, but it may help us see our state."

When the *intifada* began, Palestinians commonly claimed they had "broken the cycle of fear." Twenty-two months later, the Abu-Salins, the Fajrs and the Arouris, though living with very different aspects of the occupation, all understand "the shared," something the Israeli government has so far been unable to combat, and something the Palestinians are counting on to propel them forward. □

Dion Nissenbaum is a freelance writer based in Oakland, Calif.



A young boy from the West Bank's Jalazone refugee camp expresses his support for the *intifada*.

UNRWA Photo by George Nehmeh

EDITORIAL

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

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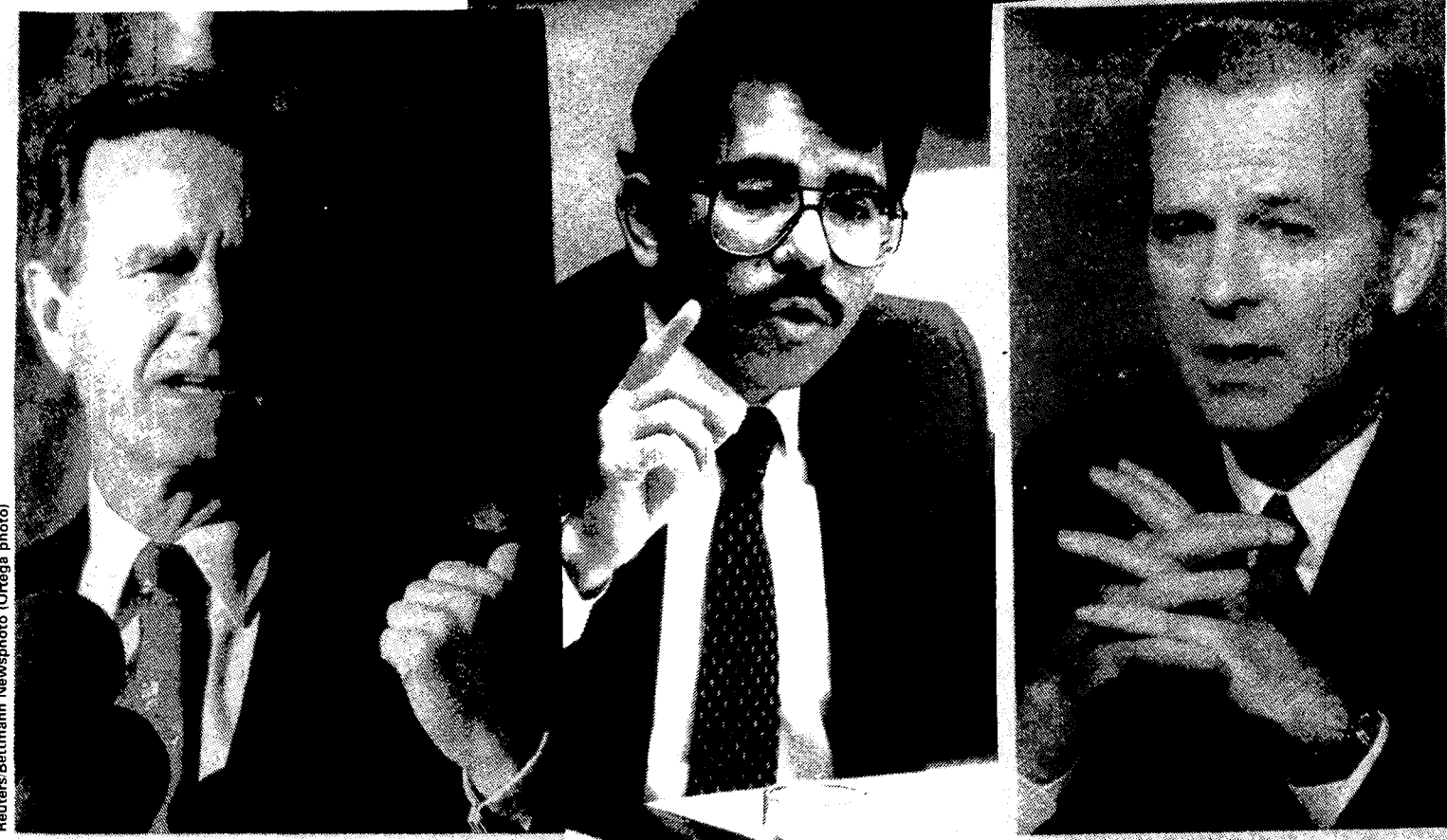
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Will the Nicaraguan elections be a rerun of Contragate?

In recent months the Bush administration has been scrambling for ways to support the anti-Sandinista coalition in the upcoming Nicaraguan elections without generating a lot of political heat in Congress. Initially, Secretary of State James A. Baker wanted Congress to give \$9 million—more than \$4.50 for each of the less than 2 million potential Nicaraguan voters—to the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) so that it could aid the United Nicaraguan Opposition headed by Violetta Chamorro. The NED, a quasi-governmental agency that promotes "free elections" overseas, is officially barred from actively taking sides in foreign elections. But Baker wanted Congress to change the law so the agency could openly help Chamorro.

To their credit, House Democratic leaders not only balked at Baker's request but also insisted on public assurances that the CIA would not be used to intervene secretly against the Sandinistas. Frustrated in these efforts, the administration in early September withdrew its request to use the NED. And last week President Bush finally stated that the CIA will not engage in secret activities to influence the outcome of Nicaragua's February elections.

These concessions were made in order to get Congress to give money openly to the Nicaraguan opposition, allegedly simply to facilitate the election process. This compromise appears finally to have given the administration a victory. Last week the House Appropriations Committee approved a bill that would provide up to \$9 million—most of it to the NED—for registering voters and monitoring the vote, but not explicitly for helping the opposition.

Does this mean that Baker and Bush have seen the light and have finally decided to stop interfering in the internal affairs of another sovereign nation? Not on your life. The week before the administration bowed to congressional pressure, Baker approached Japan's foreign minister at the recent United Nations meeting and asked that his country contribute campaign funds to the anti-Sandinista opposition. The request startled the Japanese, who diplomatically called it "inappropriate." According to news accounts in Tokyo, the secretary general of Japan's ruling Liberal Party reacted with surprise and disdain. The idea of supporting one party in another country's election is "impossible," he said. Japanese law prohibits foreigners from contributing to political parties in Japan, and presumably it would not go over well at home if the government were to violate the principle of non-interference in respect to Nicaragua.

This, of course, makes one wonder which other countries Baker has solicited to do the administration's dirty work. During the Reagan administration, as we found out during the Contragate hearings, several countries were coerced or cajoled into aiding the contras when Congress had made it illegal. Is a similar situation developing here? Congress should find out the answer to that question.

Now that it's out in open, the underlying principles should be debated

It is better that the money being spent in Nicaragua is not covert, and that at least a part of it will go for the benign purpose of facilitating the election process. Nevertheless, the principles underlying congressional aid are the same as those motivating the administration. As the press reported, lawmakers generally endorsed the idea of helping the opposition and objected only because President Bush's proposals were excessive and hastily conceived. NED president Carl Gershman, for example, acknowledged that the \$5 million Bush intends to spend through Gershman's organization in Nicaragua "dwarfs what the endowment has been able to spend" on elections in Chile, Panama, the Philippines or any other country in which his organization meddles. And Rep. Anthony C. Beilenson (D-CA) objected to the original Bush plan only because "covertly sup-

porting the opposition in these elections would be unwise, as well as unnecessary and counterproductive." Unnecessary because Congress could do so openly, even with the tacit support of the Sandinistas, who desperately need the foreign exchange, and counterproductive because everyone would know anyway and it would give the Sandinistas a public-relations advantage.

Congress never considers whether we have a right to intervene in the domestic affairs of another nation, especially in the carrying out of an election. But if another nation attempted to influence our elections it would be a different story. It doesn't take much imagination to know how Americans would react if Japan gave money to help elect anti-protectionist members of Congress, or if Arab states gave money to elect pro-Palestinian legislators. And, of course, the anger would be justified. Yet no matter how sanitized this aid appears, Congress is interested in it only because the majority of members believe it will aid the side they support in Nicaragua. But this is not Congress' business, much less our business as a democratic nation. In the glory days of the American empire, such aid—almost always covert—was routine, and so pervasive as to be immune to political criticism. Fortunately, times have changed, and what our government once did with impunity is now beginning to be publicly debated. But it's time to begin debating the underlying principles, not just the practicalities of our foreign policies.

LETTERS

The wrong fight

WOMEN'S RIGHTS ACTIVISTS HAVE BEEN HANDLING the abortion issue all wrong. Even if they must defend legal abortion, the greater focus ought to be on preventing the social and economic pressures that create unwanted pregnancy. Instead, the public is receiving an image of "the horrors of illegal abortion" vs. a story of going to the abortion clinic and living "happily ever after."

By ripping the abortion issue in half—handing the fetus to the right, the mother to the left—our society has been able to play an issue against itself. If pro-choice wins, we get cheap clinics. If right to life wins, we get prohibition. In neither case do we get the overwhelming demand for day care centers, maternity rights and family support, as well as the educational funding and pressure against acquaintance rape, that could have been generated by a holistic movement.

Once their pro-abortion position was secured by the Supreme Court, so-called "women's rights" activists should have courted even coalitions with anti-abortion moderates to push for an "abortion prevention" agenda: to prevent unwanted pregnancy, improve women's legal rights and prevent financial or social pressure for reluctant acts of abortion. "Money for moms, not for bombs."

Instead, "women's rights" activists have for the past 15 years thrown away a source of tremendous leverage in support of women's rights. The government has thus been able to completely evade a serious source of pressure to replace unjust and suicidal military priorities with meaningful social reform.

Given the popularity of abortion, the lack of tolerance by any side for civilized debate and the fact that the only ones "seriously against abortion" are voting for Hollywood presidents—even if there is state-by-state voting there can be only one long-term result. "Affordable abortions" will be at least as accessible throughout the U.S. as they already are in "Pope Silencio's" home base of Italy. Because of this, human rights for women, men and children will be diminished.

In the face of the vacuum of intelligent debate on the abortion issue, *In These Times* should promote more open and intelligent discussions and thereby gain a powerful reputation for objectivity. This could be used not only to defuse this volatile issue but to substantially improve the scope of its audience and the attention given by America to the overall issues of social justice and human rights.

In the meantime, I recommend that anyone who is thinking of voting on abortion or thinking of having an abortion be sure to read all three views: those for, those against, and their own.

Huang Mei Yuen
Brattleboro, Vt.

Why do you think they call us 'mammals'?

THREE CHEERS FOR SUSAN DOUGLAS' ARTICLE "Otherhood" (*ITT*, Sept. 20) and one question: why wimp out on the most important topic, taboo or not, of motherhood? I'm talking about breastfeeding. Human beings are "mammals"; the word comes from

Latin and means breast. It means our primary survival strategy as a species is the long and involved process of nurturing our young at the breast.

Scientists are now proving what babies instinctively know at birth—breastfeeding encourages optimal human development. The intimate nursing relationship bonds infants to their mothers and, through them, to all people. It is no surprise that the same society that relegates breastfeeding to the realm of the socially unacceptable has no qualms about building bombs to annihilate everyone on Earth. The same people who prefer babies to bond to plastic bottles of milk are people who would sacrifice human needs in the pursuit of material wealth.

That we, as mammals, have stopped breastfeeding and conscientiously raising our young in favor of making money is a sure sign that our social priorities are driving us down the road to extinction.

J. Rain Mako
Parthenon, Ark.

Pro-family test

IAPPLAUD SUSAN DOUGLAS' LONG-NEEDED STANCE on the need for political clout for mothers (*ITT*, Sept. 20), but I'd go further than she does. Why stop at federally funded day care, paternity leave and flexible job hours for young parents? If the government is so pro-family, then why not put its money where its mouth is? Why not pay stipends, salaries in fact, for mothers or fathers who work the important careers of child raiser and primary caregiver, not to mention coordinator of the household? Having had a career of work outside the home in the 10 years between our children, I found the far more demanding and significant one to be mothering. (Ironically, my career is in child care, helping other mothers find safe, stimulating and

developmentally appropriate care for their children.)

Having had to scramble, struggle and scrimp—juggling jobs, hours and responsibilities, my husband and I have done a damn good job. But, as Douglas writes, I can only imagine the scene for poor single mothers. When I look into the future, I am often less fearful about the world being blown up than about the now-children as adults in a world that will need all the help and leadership it can get: the poor ones caught in the perpetual maelstrom; the luckier and wealthier ones who could have the opportunity for leadership inappropriately seeking the nurturing they never got from hired nannies and moms and dads who had only "quality" time with them.

Ellen Schmidt
Ithaca, N.Y.

Do you have that in a smaller size?

REGARDING HAROLD MEYERSON'S PIECE ON Michael Harrington (*ITT*, Aug. 30): Michael Harrington did not come up to Eugene Debs' ankles! Some mantles are not passed on, and Debs' was one of them.

Raymond R. Rector
Muskogee, Okla.

Flagging

WITH ALL THE HEAT THE FLAG HAS BEEN GETTING lately, it's hard to imagine how Old Glory keeps on flying. Yet fly she does—and more often than ever.

Up to 350 flags are flown every day—individually—up the same flag pole—for at least 30 seconds on the west front roof of the Capitol.

The Office of the Capitol Architect has

been providing "Flown Over the Capitol" flags to congressional offices and their constituencies since 1937. Records kept at the Institute of Heraldry state that six flags were flown that first year. In 1970, 31,722 flags were flown, and last year 114,151 flags had their 30 seconds of glory over the Capitol. Members of Congress present these second-hand Stars and Stripes to schools, town halls and senior centers.

Anyone can have his or her very own "Flown Over the Capitol" flag by sending a written request with a check for \$7.50 for a three-by-five-foot nylon, \$8 for a three-by-five-foot cotton, \$17.50 for a five-by-eight-foot nylon or \$18.25 for a five-by-eight-foot cotton flag to a member of the U.S. House or Senate. Names, dates and occasions are inscribed on special certificates that come with the flags.

Apparently, the furor over flag burning has been good for business. The Flag Office reports that there has been an unusual increase in flag requests this summer.

To anyone who wants to exercise this most recently affirmed constitutional right—and maybe it's more of a statement to desecrate a "Flown Over the Capitol" flag—an anonymous source offers this advice, "Cotton flags burn really well, but nylon ones tend to melt."

Amanda Robb
Washington, D.C.

Repression

IBELIEVE RICH MCKERROW DIDN'T GET ALL OF HIS facts straight in his "Summer in Guatemala: the untold story" (*ITT*, Sept. 13). According to the July *Informe Publico* of Peace Brigades International in Guatemala City, the bombing of Channel 7 occurred one half hour before a scheduled interview with Daniel Ortega and during a speech by President Vinicio Cerezo. Your article states that the bombing occurred after the interview with Daniel Ortega.

There is so much repression now in both El Salvador and Guatemala, and the U.S. is so responsible for it, why doesn't *In These Times* devote a page in every issue to human-rights abuses and political developments in those countries?

Yesterday I received word from Finding that the bodies of four university students, previously abducted, were found near the campus of the University of San Carlos on September 10. On September 12, the bodies of two other students were found. On September 10 and 12, two more students were abducted.

Jim Veeder
Margaretville, N.Y.

SYLVIA



by Nicole Hollander



By Hillel Schenker

FORTY-SIX TO SEVEN SOUNDS LIKE A RESOUNDING victory in the National Football League. But in Israeli politics, 46 to seven was the comparison of the number of minutes that American President George Bush spent with Vice Premier Shimon Peres vs. the number of minutes he spent with Foreign Minister Moshe Arens in New York in late September. Just when we thought we had seen it all, Israel's extraordinary national unity government continues to come up with new entries for the (political science) books.

The latest flurry of stopwatch politics was generated by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's 10-point proposal for resolving differences between the Israeli and Palestinian approaches to elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as a step toward resolving the ongoing conflict.

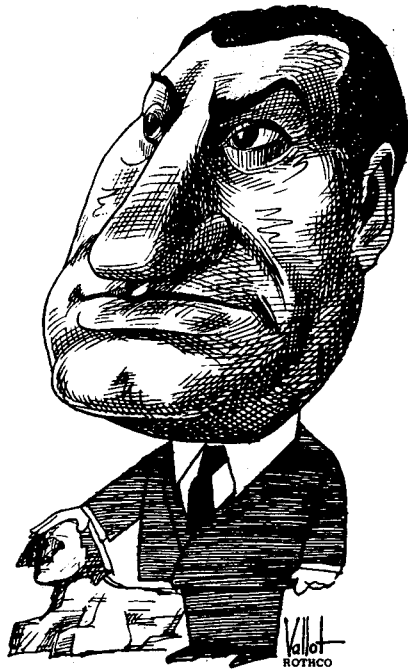
According to Mubarak's proposal, both Israelis and Palestinians will have to compromise for the sake of a possible peaceful resolution. Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) leaders are being asked to accept an election formula that contains no specific reference to PLO involvement or to a Palestinian state, their ultimate goal. In exchange, Israeli government leaders—particularly Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and his Likud Party—are being asked to accept the principle of "land for peace," or a territorial compromise, which is anathema to them.

The Egyptian president has invited an Israeli delegation, to be designated by the

Israelis, U.S. threaten to squander a promising plan

Israeli government, and a Palestinian delegation, to be composed of representatives from the Occupied Territories, to come to Cairo to discuss the parameters of the elections, as well as any other matters that might promote the peace process. Realizing that Palestinians do not want their nation to be divided between "Palestinians from the inside" and "Palestinians from the outside," Mubarak has suggested that two Palestinians who have been deported from the Occupied Territories be included in the Palestinian delegation to Cairo. That way the PLO could say that the Palestinian nation was not being fragmented, while the Israelis could claim that all of the representatives were from the West Bank and Gaza Strip alone. The Egyptian president has even suggested that he would be ready to designate the Palestinian delegation, rather than the PLO—though obviously in coordination with the PLO—to make it easier for the Israeli government to digest the plan.

The 10-point plan has breathed new life into the moribund election proposal. Half of the Israeli government—led by Labor Party leaders Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Vice Premier and Finance Minister Peres—have embraced the plan. The mainstream PLO leadership has once again demonstrated its newfound pragmatism



Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak

and flexibility by indicating a readiness to accept the 10 points, and the generally hesitant Bush administration has also sent out positive signals about the plan—one of which was the fact that Bush met with Peres for 47 minutes and with Arens for only seven minutes. The missing link, of course, is Shamir, Arens and their colleagues from the right-wing Likud Party.

Stay tuned: All of this has created another episode in the soap-opera-like periodic Israeli government crises. The Labor Party is threatening to leave the government if Shamir rejects the Egyptian formula, while voices are being raised in the Likud to "throw the Labor Party out and go to the people" with new elections—in Israel, not in the West Bank and Gaza. This time the crisis could prove real. However, based on past record, it is still most likely the two combatant parties will back down and find another of their interminable compromises to ensure that each retains a portion of the power. If the compromise ena-

years, they appear to think that they can sit back and relax, cautiously defend the interests that they represent and carry out a minimum of initiatives that are necessary to get them through the four years without too many political bruises.

Unfortunately, this relatively passive approach, particularly toward international diplomacy, comes at a time of great opportunity for a reduction in world tensions and for significant progress toward the resolution of regional conflicts.

The Middle East is one of the prime examples of this new circumstance. The Soviet Union has declared, through many channels, that it is ready to cooperate with any meaningful American effort to promote a political resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and a comprehensive and stable peace in the region. All that is required is American will, initiative and political acumen.

While former President Jimmy Carter may have a mixed reputation in the U.S., he is viewed in Israel, Egypt and Panama as a world-class statesman. That is because he took the initiative without which there would have been no Camp David Accords and no Panama Canal Treaty.

In retrospect, the Camp David Accords appear to be flawed because they didn't lay adequate foundations for movement toward a political resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Former Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Harold Saunders, an architect of the Camp David Accords, recently said that the Bush-Baker government has an opportunity to promote peace that wasn't available to the Carter administration—the parallel U.S.-PLO and U.S.-Israeli dialogues. The U.S. government should use this opportunity to promote support for the Mubarak formula, or for any other workable formula that promotes political movement toward a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Thus the 68 senators who are calling upon the State Department to deny a visa to PLO Chairman Arafat may think that they are acting in defense of Israel's interests, but actually they are undermining Israel's deepest interests, which include an effective and productive U.S.-PLO dialogue to help create formulas that will lay the foundation for negotiations.

In late September Bush finally took the initiative during his address to the United Nations, outlining a proposal to end the "scourge" of chemical weapons. But not one word of his speech was devoted to the Middle East. He missed an obvious connection: one of the most dangerous aspects of the Middle East arms race is the apparent stockpiling by Israel and its neighbors of nuclear and chemical weapons. The Middle East is a nuclear and chemical powder keg.

Today Palestinians are suffering from continued occupation and repressive Israeli attempts to put down the *intifada* (see story on page 12), while Israelis are suffering from 10 percent unemployment and low morale. But if in the months ahead prospects for peace break down and the conflict degenerates into another round of warfare, the current troubles will appear manageable.

Now is the time for action. Mubarak's 10-point plan creates an opportunity for progress that should be fully explored.

Hillel Schenker, senior editor of *New Outlook* in Tel Aviv, is currently serving as the U.S. representative of the Israeli monthly.

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If prospects for peace collapse and the conflict degenerates again into warfare, today's troubles will seem manageable.

bles a meeting between an Israeli and a Palestinian delegation to take place in Cairo, it would have been worthwhile. Otherwise, it would represent the squandering of yet another opportunity to promote a political process that could save countless lives and could lay the foundation for an equitable political solution.

Bush push: But a push is needed from President Bush and Secretary of State James Baker. As an Israeli observer of the American political process, my impressions are that Bush and his allies mobilized tremendous resources and ran a vigorous campaign to gain control of the White House. Now that they are safely ensconced on Pennsylvania Avenue, presumably for at least the next four

Hurricanes of Change

In the absence of a revolutionary party, it often becomes the role of natural calamities (or God, if you happen to think He is the Disposer Supreme) to raise consciousness and expose the contradictions. Even with a revolutionary party, a calamity like the Managua earthquake can play an important role. (And the fact that the Nicaraguan hurricane last year did not provoke serious outbreaks of militant discontent must be reckoned as evidence of the Sandinistas' achievements.) For the desperate, hurricanes can be opportunities. A hurricane once hit one of the Caribbean islands, and a youth seized his pen and wrote:

"I take up my pen, just to give you an imperfect account of the most dreadful hurricane that memory or any records whatever can trace. Good God! what horror and destruction it's impossible for me to describe or you to form any idea of it. It seemed as if a total dissolution of nature was taking place. The roaring of the sea and wind, fiery meteors flying about in the air, the prodigious glare of almost perpetual lightning, the crash of the ear-piercing shrieks of the distressed, were sufficient to strike astonishment into angels."

The pen writing those lines was that of Alexander Hamilton. At the age of 15 the future secretary of the treasury was living on St. Croix when the fearsome hurricane of 1772 struck the island. Hamilton dashed off his description and submitted it to the *American Gazette*, the chief English-language newspaper of the islands, held at that time by Denmark. It was the turning point of Hamilton's life. The hurricane struck on August 31. Hamilton's account appeared on October 3. Influential islanders discovered the article's author and forthwith dispatched him to the mainland to improve his education and carve a career for himself.

When the late summer winds had begun to knock the shutters, young Hamilton, stuck in Mr. Cruger's counting house, heard opportunity knock, too. He was not the only one in St. Croix's history to see the bright side of a dark hour. Thirty-nine years earlier, in 1733, St. Croix was afflicted, in successive order, by drought, hurricane, a plague of insects, another hurricane, starvation and then, imposed upon St. Croix's African slaves, the infamous Gardelin code, named for the Danish governor and described by William Boyer, author of *America's Virgin Islands: A History of Human Rights and Wrong*, as perhaps "unparalleled in world history as one of the most barbarous and oppressive measures ever imposed on a people."

The Gardelin code stipulated mutilation and torture for almost any manifestation of discontent by the island's slaves, who had held the island against assaults by the Danes, as well as British and French troops summoned by the panic-stricken Norsemen. Finally overwhelmed, many of the slaves chose suicide, sensibly as it turned out, since those who surrendered on pledges of amnesty were executed immediately. Those who were captured were shipped off to St. Thomas in chains and there broken on the wheel and left in the sun to dry.

There may have been some young emulator of Hamilton scribbling notes when Hurricane Hugo hit the islands of the eastern Caribbean, including St. Croix, on the evening of September 17. If so, no newspaper chose to give immediate publication

to his report. Amid headline stories two days later about the destruction in Puerto Rico and fears for what the hurricane boded for the mainland, almost nothing was written about the fate of St. Croix beyond a brief note that from 30 percent to 70 percent of the island's homes had been destroyed, along with most power and communications equipment, and that looting had occurred. Four days after the hurricane there came headlines about the ordering of U.S. troops to the Virgin Islands after widespread looting had broken out. For *CBS Evening News*, Juan Vasquez reported that "the residents of St. Croix are overjoyed to see the soldiers [1,100 military police dispatched by President Bush] from the mainland." The word "residents" means in this context "white people who have settled on the island," and Vasquez's wrap-up lines were also unintentionally revealing: "For ... tourists the nightmare is ending. For the residents, the question on shattered St. Croix is whether to stay or leave with them."

Of course the true natives of St. Croix are scarcely in financial shape to hop aboard a plane like the tourists or fearful "residents." St. Croix is at least 75 percent black, and the looting seems to have been a very understandable attempt by the black poor to obtain a more equitable allocation of the island's resources.

For most of the black native inhabitants of St. Croix, the word "nightmare" has had rather longer-term reverberations than the grim couple of days experienced by those tourists. Even the short-term mainland response was dismal. While the French and the British were rushing emergency supplies to nearby Guadeloupe and Montserrat, respectively, the best that the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency could do was send a C-141 transport with radio equipment and a bunch of bureaucrats in search of the facts. Atherton Martin, coordinator of the Development GAP, a Washington-based policy group, says that it took three days for help to arrive in St. Croix after the hurricane, and "on the fourth day what came in were soldiers, not goods and services."

The airstrip at St. Croix was not damaged, so there was no excuse for the tardy response. Martin explains that the people of St. Croix would have needed fresh water supplies and an emergency electric grid.

There's not much rain on St. Croix, and most houses have concrete water storage tanks under them, with water pumped up by electricity. Without power most houses don't have either drinking water or sanitation or, of course, lights.

There is also the longer-term explanation for the looting. Most of the tourist development in the Virgins has been concentrated on St. John and St. Thomas. St. Croix, as Martin says, "is seen as a place for cheap labor." It is on St. Croix that most of the industrial development, bauxite and aluminum processing and petroleum refining has occurred. The lawyer William Kunstler, who once spent about a year on St. Croix representing some black youths accused in a sensational slaying, says that on St. Croix there is a division of labor in which whites have most of the good jobs and off-island blacks and Latinos dominate the tourism jobs, leaving the most menial occupations to the locals. This is not the case on the other islands, according to Kunstler, whose people are not as fiercely "independent and liberty-loving."

Island of contrasts: In St. Croix's capital city of Christiansted, "the difference between people starving and people tourist-ing is very stark." Kunstler added that St. Croix was extremely violent, with rampant official corruption. The U.S. bought the Virgin Islands from Denmark in 1917 for \$25 million, or about \$295 an acre, and the islands now have the utterly nebulous status of "unincorporated territories" with a non-voting representative in the U.S. Congress.

Statistics are extremely hard to come by, but people knowledgeable about the islands all agree that the post-hurricane uprising on St. Croix was not unexpected. Martin said, "All of this is part of a formula for an eventual explosion." Larry Birns, director of the Council on Hemispheric Affairs, called the island "a volatile situation of the immiserated conditions of a Third World country." Boyer, author of the excellent history of the Virgin Islands, says that "given the crime and disaffection of natives who are against people outside taking over their island, I'm not surprised by the instability caused by the hurricane. 'Unincorporated' means no promise of statehood, no self-determination, even though all the preconditions for statehood are there." Though the automobile license plates say "American

Paradise," St. Croix's schools, roads and hospitals are all in poor shape. A 1976 statement by St. Croix's health employees noted shortages of food, equipment and medicine, poor salaries and similar conditions sufficiently vile "to cause the strongest to cry in anguish." In 1979 both hospitals in the islands had their accreditation withdrawn, and, according to the American Hospitals Association, this accreditation has never been reinstated. Birns says that unemployment and underemployment hovered around 30 percent before the hurricane. Median family income in the Virgin Islands is \$11,914.

Until 1966 a publicly funded body called the Virgin Islands Corporation supervised development with the objective of providing employment to native Crucians. Boyer called it "one of the most extreme examples of socialism ever experienced under the American flag," adding that this definition of socialism here is "government ownership and administration of the means of production." In the mid-'60s forces strongly antipathetic to such public enterprise were becoming entrenched in the islands, and the corporation yielded to private tourist and industrial pressures.

U.S. tariff laws allowed companies to ship manufactured goods duty-free from the islands to the mainland. Between 1961 and 1966 the tax laws were amended every year, offering subsidies and tax breaks for companies choosing to operate in the islands. Between 1966 and 1971 Hess Oil, enjoying a great competitive advantage through classification of its huge refinery as domestic rather than foreign, was exempt from all real-estate taxes, excise taxes on building and raw materials, ad valorem duty on imports and taxes on gross receipts. Though a condition of these subsidies was that 75 percent of corporate employees should be legal residents of the Virgin Islands, according to Boyer, by 1970 only about 10 percent of the workforce was reported to be native Virgin Islanders.

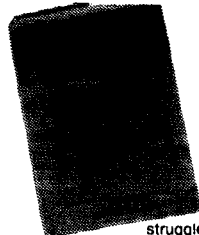
The nearest St. Croix got to revolution in modern times was the killing of seven whites and one black in 1972 on the Fountain Valley golf course, developed by David and Laurance Rockefeller in 1964. This investment fueled a speculative boom that, by the end of the '60s, saw almost all the beaches of St. Thomas and St. Croix gone to "development." Five black youths were eventually convicted for those killings, which remain as vivid in the minds of the white "residents" as, no doubt, the 1733 slave rebellion did for earlier settlers. ■

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By Alexander Cockburn

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Roger and Me
Directed by Michael Moore

By Patrick Z. McGavin

WITH HIS SCATHING DOCUMENTARY *Roger and Me*, Michael Moore transformed himself from outcast radical to poet of the underclass. You remember Moore, the working-class socialist, a brilliant, difficult editor whose brief reign at *Mother Jones* occasioned a flurry of

FILM

denunciations and countercharges within the left-wing press.

For three years Moore has set out to record the devastating impact of General Motors' plant closings in his hometown of Flint, Mich., and the attendant loss of 30,000 jobs. A dark rumination on the collapse of the American Dream, *Roger and Me* is a singular achievement, a cross between Kafka and Errol Morris. At once hilarious and frightening, it's a raw, nervy examination of dissatisfaction in American culture.

"I didn't want to preach to the converted," said Moore in Toronto, where *Roger and Me* played at the recent film festival. "So it's important to me that the film is entertaining as well as have something interesting to say. When the movies began there were a number of people—Charlie Chaplin is probably the best example—who used humor but also had a very strong social statement to make. I think you can be political and laugh at the same time."

Knaves and raves: *Roger and Me*, it turned out, was an unqualified phenomenon. Voted the most popular film in Toronto, it became the subject of an intense bidding war among Hollywood and off-Hollywood distributors. Rumors abounded that the rights to this \$160,000 film had escalated to more than \$1 million. On the critical front it gained the kind of loyalty and advocacy rarely seen. When it played in the prestigious New York Film Festival in late September, Vincent Canby, the most influential critic in America, called Moore an heir to Twain. (For other festival highlights, see accompanying story.)

Moore's advance into the front ranks of American documentarians wasn't so obvious. "I dropped out of college," Moore says. "I don't know why I was going. I guess I felt I was supposed to go, but I always hated school." He founded and edited the superb alternative newspaper the *Michigan Voice* before he gave it up to run *Mother Jones*. Writing in his June 1986 "Backstage" column, *Mother Jones*' honcho Adam Hochschild declared Moore a "kindred spirit with a remarkable track record," whose hiring was "bold and daring." Four and a half months later, Moore was fired.

"I didn't want to be an editor at



You're auto here: GM Chairman Roger Smith shows that what's good for General Motors is good for General Motors.

Flinty Michael Moore hits it big on the festival circuit

one of these magazines. I gave up the paper in Michigan. Starting that up again would have been very difficult." He was unemployed, "going to a lot of movies, being very depressed and wanting to get out. I thought, 'That's what I'll do.' I like movies, and so I decided to make one."

The premise of *Roger and Me* is simple. Moore holds General Motors Chairman Roger Smith accountable for Flint's economic destruction (GM relocated its heavy industry to Mexico). Moore wants to take Smith on a tour of the city to witness firsthand the ugly repercussions of GM's pullout—the spiraling crime rate,

the severe unemployment and the sharp rise in domestic violence. Moore invades Smith's private sanctum of privilege and class to track him down, to force Smith and GM to acknowledge Flint's blight and deterioration. "I wanted to try to create this portrait of a town," he says. "We wanted to name names, put a human face on this corporation."

Following the money: *Roger and Me* is studded with devastating juxtapositions that are resolutely chilling, not the least of which trace the indifference of the upper-middle class. "We made a conscious deci-

sion: we didn't want to go to the unemployment line, to the welfare offices," Moore says. "We see that every night on the news and it's numbing, so you're so desensitized to it. I want to know where the rich are. I want to see where they're hanging out. I want to know what they're thinking. I didn't want to sit there and film the homeless. I want to know why there are homeless."

Moore's contrasts and crosscuts are deft; he confronts Smith at a Christmas Eve party while the sheriff evicts a former GM employee from his modest home. Moore documents the pathetic attempts by local politicians to revive the economy (a \$3 million Hyatt Regency, a \$100 million AutoLand theme park—both went bust). He allows Bob Eubanks and Miss America to ramble on about their shallow, empty lives. He offers up a priceless encounter with four women playing golf at an exclusive club wherein one admonishes the city's unemployed to work harder. "You couldn't have written some of these scenes; you just couldn't have," Moore says.

The rough draft of *Roger and Me* was a June 6, 1987, article Moore wrote for *The Nation* ("General Motors pulls out: in Flint, tough times last"). It was a working through of the primary themes and organizing principles. It was there the surreal construction began to take shape. Ronald Reagan takes 12 unemployed workers to lunch and tells them to move to Texas; the mayor pays Rev. Robert Schuller \$20,000 to make an inspirational speech telling them, "You can turn your hurt into a halo"; Pat Boone and Anita Bryant turn up.

With his appreciation for camp and his affinity for gaudy kitsch and lowbrow theatrics, Moore reminds you of Jonathan Demme, particularly in the undeniable affection he feels for his characters. There is, I told him, a thin line between parody and condescension. "It is a thin line," Moore says, "and sometimes films cross that line, and I don't like those films. I don't think this film did that. This isn't David Byrne going down to Texas to poke fun at small-town folks. You know I'm one of those people. I happen to like most of them. I respect the others that maybe I don't like that much."

Beyond technique: Moore raised the money necessary to complete the film by "selling my house ... and everything else except my stereo and TV." He ran a Tuesday-night bingo game for three years. But most significantly, Moore won a \$58,000 settlement from *Mother Jones* in a suit for wrongful dismissal. ("I forgot to thank them in the credits," he deadpans.) Not even his complete lack of formal experience stopped him. "Technical knowledge is something that is used to keep people away from things. It's meant to intimidate. I just chose not to be intimidated by it. You can learn anything technical. The creative end is the hard part."

What emerges most forcefully through Moore's angry polemic is an unflinching social critique that reaches significantly beyond the perimeter of Flint, Mich. "General Motors isn't the problem. Roger Smith isn't the problem. Our economic system is the problem. We have an economic system that creates a lot of harm, a lot of violence. Until it becomes more democratic, we're going to continue to hurt more and more people."

A week later Moore calls me to talk about the negotiations with a distributor. "I want it to be seen by a lot of people," he says. "But I don't know if a major distributor is right for this film now. Their interests are possibly antithetical to mine. What's good is that I control the cards."

What does he hope to achieve with the film? "I hope people think about who's running the show. I really want people who don't have money to see this film. I would like people to get angry."

Patrick Z. McGavin is a Chicago-area writer.

By Patrick Z. McGavin

Toronto Festival's whirlwind world tour

THE FIRST THING YOU NOTICE about Toronto's exceptional film festival is the numbers. With 332 films from 38 countries on view from September 7 to 16, the sheer density of the programming occasioned a giddy exhilaration and a numbing exhaustion.

I saw more than 30 films in seven days, and it shouldn't go unreported how obsessive this city tends to be about movies. Where else can you go to a Sunday morning screening of Maurizio Nichetti's deft putdown of Italian television *Ladri di saponette* ("The Icicle Thief") and discover a line that stretches to infinity?

The festival's anti-Hollywood drift notwithstanding, the opening-night gala was Canadian director Norman Jewison's *In Country*, a painfully sincere adaptation of Bobbie Ann Mason's novel about the emotional legacies of Vietnam. Despite an amazing performance from British teenager Emily Lloyd, the film is a crushing disappointment. Jewison's tone is erratic, invoking Bruce Springsteen's "I'm on Fire," the flag and ritual to blur left right symbolism, which reduces the complex political issues to an overtly simplistic resolution.

Hits and misses: Lloyd plays a Kentucky schoolgirl confronting the psychological and physical repercussions of the war as she watches over her passive, withdrawn uncle (Bruce Willis). Jewison has a strong facility for actors, and the smaller, isolated sequences (Lloyd's flowering sexuality, her urge to break free) have an emotional force the rest of the film can't match. Inchoate to a fault, the film abounds in missed opportunities.

The strongest American film I saw was Gus Van Sant's superb *Drugstore Cowboy*—a devastating examination of drug addiction, adapted from James Fogle's unpublished novel. Matt Dillon and Kelly Lynch reveal unprecedented depths as a fatalistic couple robbing pharmacies to support their habits. Van Sant juxtaposes super-8, surreal dream sequences and a spiraling narrative that imparts a freaked-out, manic intensity. Cinematographer Robert Yeoman aestheticizes the drug subculture with an unflinching raw lyricism.

Less imposing was Jim Jarmusch's redundant *Mystery Train*. Apparently the final episode of his trilogy that began with *Stranger Than Paradise* and *Down by Law*, the director's absurdist, deadpan minimalism defeats him here. Telling three separate stories linked to a rundown, sleazy Memphis hotel, this visually repetitive and structurally unbalanced film takes a dim, caricatured view of blacks and the South and verges on the worst kind of condescension. Working with Wim Wenders' frequent cameraman Robby Muller, Jarmusch's film looks great, but it's empty and cold.

Nichetti's *The Icicle Thief* moves

seamlessly from farce to parody. Impeccably composed and framed, it bears traces of Chaplin, Keaton and Woody Allen. It's an inventive, stylish and remarkably ambitious work, with a pungent, hilarious critique of television, advertising and intellectuals.

Jesus of Montreal: Denys Arcand's *Jesus of Montreal* won the international critics' prize—and for two-thirds of its length establishes a near-mystical reworking of Christ's death and resurrection. The elabor-

ate sets and deep-focus photography are breathtaking, a feverish re-imagining that works as anti-spectacle. But Arcand aspires to a larger profundity he can't pull off, and the literal, forced ending erases much of the strong material that preceded it.

FILM

ate sets and deep-focus photography are breathtaking, a feverish re-imagining that works as anti-spectacle. But Arcand aspires to a larger profundity he can't pull off, and the literal, forced ending erases much of the strong material that preceded it.

Jon Amiel's *Queen of Hearts* recalls Terence Davies' superb *Distant Voices Still Lives* with its fetishized objects, use of popular songs and fanciful play on memory. As you'd expect from the director of *The Singing Detective*, the film's design and

look is intoxicating. But in the final 30 minutes the film's buoyant, imaginative arc is deflated by its insistence on the sentimental and obvious.

There's no such problem with David Hare's superb *Strapless*, which is his best screenplay to date. Blair Brown plays an American doctor working in London who falls for an enigmatic loner (Bruno Ganz). Hare's bold, circular camera movements, tight compositions and superbly modulated story construction—never giving us too many details—account for an almost-perfect film.

Two French masters are in top form. Bertrand Tavernier's ambitious *La vie et rien d'autre* ("Life and Nothing But") attempts no less than to assess the devastating impact of World War I on French society. Tavernier sets his film two years after the armistice. France is ravaged spiritually and physically, and Philippe Noiret is an officer who must identify the war dead. Tavernier's assured touch, fluent storytelling and haunting visuals are overwhelming; you only wish he'd junked the unconvincing love angle. Still, it's

a provocative effort. Bertrand Blier's *Trop belle pour toi* stars Gerard Depardieu as a wealthy garage owner who dumps his beautiful wife Carole Bouquet for a plain, middle-aged secretary (Josiane Balasko); the clean, economic storytelling and ravishing imagery make for a breathlessly entertaining farce on infidelity.

The most extraordinary performance was Daniel Day Lewis' virtuoso turn as Christy Brown in Jim Sheridan's *My Left Foot*, a surprisingly strong biography of the Irish painter-author severely handicapped by cerebral palsy. This isn't a sanitized work but one that tackles Brown's disengagement from "normal" society. At great risk it courageously confronts Brown's alcoholism and his bitter, difficult relationship with his physical therapist.

Dekalog: If you rated the single

most important film in Toronto, aesthetically, politically and morally, the North American premiere of Krzysztof Kieslowski's extraordinary 10-part modern adaptation of the Ten Commandments called *Dekalog* erased its competition. Working with eight different cinematographers, Kieslowski shot the series in two years for Polish television, sometimes shooting three episodes concurrently.

In a stunning departure, Kieslowski said through an interpreter that none of the films required prior approval from the Polish government. "I was my own censor," he said. His two landmark, extended 90-minute episodes—*A Short Film About Love* and *A Short Film About Killing*—expressed such an intensity, purity and conviction that they've established Kieslowski as one of the most exciting and disturbing voices in film today.

In fact, the entire Polish retrospective organized by Barbara Poznanski and Piers Handling was the Toronto festival's high-water mark, offering a rare chance to view early works by Jerzy Skolimowski, Andrzej Wajda, Krzysztof Zanussi, Roman Polanski and Agnieszka Holland. It suggests that this troubled, deeply conflicted state could emerge as a catalyst for a vibrant new international cinema. ■

Where else can you attend an esoteric Sunday morning screening and find a line that stretches to infinity?

Spirited performances uplift *Jesus of Montreal* (left), *My Left Foot* (far right) and *In Country* (below).



IN THE ARTS

By Pat Aufderheide

New releases: the video beat (and the offbeat) goes on

AS VIDEO CULTURE GROWS, SO do the offbeat offerings. Although it's unlikely that you'll find them in your local video store, libraries, universities and unions are beginning to build their own video shelves. Here are some recent releases that are worth tracking down.

Even if **Mapantsula** (Thug) were not a rousing tale, it would merit attention as the first anti-apartheid feature film made inside South Africa by South Africans. (South African director Oliver Schmitz is the son of German immigrants.) But it works just as well as entertainment as it does as political argument. Panic, the thug of the title (rendered in an excellent performance by co-scripter Thomas Mogotlane), is a formidable anti-hero—a thief, a bully, a mooch. All around him, Sowetans are mobilizing a rent strike. But Panic is busy stealing from unsuspecting whites and brawling with rivals in black bars, with a little police informing on the side. His girlfriend, who works in an English-speaking household, is his unwilling source of cash and potential burglary prospects. As Soweto heats up, against his will the thug is forced to take sides.

The feature, whose heroes are members of the United Democratic Front and whose archvillains are the white police and the callous white bourgeoisie, clearly takes sides. But it also illuminates the contradictions within Soweto. Panic, like the character Richard Harris played in *The Molly Maguires* (1970), is both exploiter and victim. The complexities of the crisis are also revealed through characters like his girlfriend, who just wants a decent job; his desperate landlady; and the black town council members who are getting rich off black misery.

Mapantsula is well told, although its central device—showing Panic's story in flashback while he's in jail—is confusing at times. Films such as *Woza Albert!* and *Voices of Sarafina!* have already prepared American audiences for superb professional performances, and *Mapantsula*'s cast, drawn from a pool of black TV and stage actors, only enhances that reputation.

An Australian, English and South African co-production, *Mapantsula* was approved by South African officials as a gangster film—like many made in South Africa today for black audiences and, indeed, like one we see black audiences watching in the film. Its \$1.5 million budget was raised from South African investors, most of whom were looking only for tax advantages and assumed it was a gangster movie.

The African National Congress, which has conditioned its stance on the cultural boycott to approve some projects that support the movement, has praised the film. And



Thomas Mogotlane as a thug named Panic in the South African film, *Mapantsula*.

predictably, it has been banned within South Africa in theaters, though it is available in video there.

VIDEO

Now it is available in video (as well as 16mm) here, through California Newsreel, 149 9th St., #420, San Francisco, CA 94103.

Consumer Hunger, produced by

Bringing the world home on cassette isn't always easy, but it's worth the trouble.

Ilan Ziv for Maryknoll World (Maryknoll, NY 10545), is a devastating, fascinating critique of television news, focused on the Ethiopian famine. In three self-contained half-hour segments, the documentary probes why the news took so long to get to U.S. viewers, how it reproduced stereotypes about Africa, and how the mega-event Hands Across America translated a political issue into an emotional commodity. Material includes footage the networks never used, interviews with network producers and clips from Hollywood epics that remind us how often news comes framed by expectations created by entertainment. The trilogy's sharply critical point of view is well substantiated and rich in discussion possibilities.

The Mexican Tapes (Facets Video, 1517 W. Fullerton, Chicago, IL 60614), by video artist Louis Hock, takes four hours to take you inside the life of a colony of illegal Mexican immigrants in San Diego. Hock lived with the families whose lives he documents—romance, babies, barbecues and the constant threat of La Migra—until the cheap housing they all lived in was torn down. The documentary's charm (and irritation) is Hock's ingenuous diary approach. Its value, and the justification for its diary format, is its non-judgmental agenda, which lets you know what's at stake for the immigrants (most of whom come to the U.S. only to make money to take back to Mexico, and most of whom don't succeed in accumulating the stash).

You also see La Migra from the immigrants' side. It seems sort of like one of many natural forces (although the most powerful) that make life in the U.S. what one man calls "a big prison."

Take Care translates to video the musical created by Local 1199 Drug, Hospital and Health Care Employees Union in New York, through its cultural Bread and Roses program (330 W. 42nd St., #1905, New York, NY 10036). The revue, recast from workers' experiences by theater professionals, has been presented to workers and patients in the workplace (see *In These Times*, April 12). On video it suffers in translation. Even though director Hart Perry cuts frequently to audience reaction, on a small screen the musical numbers sometimes come across as painfully well intentioned and performance glitches glare in closeup. Still, the themes—job burnout, irritation at unchallenging work, concern for the patients—speak to the problems of service workers generally. What steals the show are the intercut interviews with real workers.

One Hundred Children Waiting for a Train, by Chilean filmmaker Ignacio Agüero, is a subtle condemnation of Pinochet's Chile as it is a poignant statement about hope and the liberating power of the imagination. The hour-long video tracks a group of slum children who, under the auspices of a Catholic Church-sponsored class, see movies (some for the first time) and learn how to make them. Children talk about their work, their class, their aspirations ("I want to be a military man—I like the way they walk," says one). "Is this the first time you were filmed?" asks the interviewer after a movie-making session. "Yes, but not the first time we were recorded," explains a little girl, who then recounts the day her family was interrogated by Chilean police. Gracefully photographed and simply produced, the documentary captures the wonder of discovery as these children's imaginations are tickled with celluloid magic and caring attention. The video (distributed by First Run Icarus Films, 200 Park Ave. S., #1319, New York, NY 10003) eschews the didactic, but the sight of one kid's face lighting up is already a statement about the deprivation that surrounds that moment.

Also noted: The frank interviews with caregivers of persons with AIDS in Mark Dworkin's **Finding Our Way Together** (American Red Cross, 1900 25th Ave. S., Seattle, WA 98144-4708) open up a still-touchy subject. **Shoot and Cry** (First Run/Icarus, 200 Park Ave. S., #1319, New York, NY 10003), made several years ago in Israel, offers a valuable background to the conflict fueling the *intifada* today, with its profile of a Palestinian restaurant worker in dialogue—and sometimes conflict—with a young Israeli student.

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Recasting America: Culture and Politics in the Age of Cold War

Edited by Lary May
University of Chicago Press
310 pp., \$15.95

By Martha Buskirk

MUCH OF OUR RECENT HISTORY seems to come to us in neatly packaged decades, each labeled with its own cliché. And according to this scheme, the '50s were the glorious years of the commodity. Above all, we are asked to remember

HISTORY

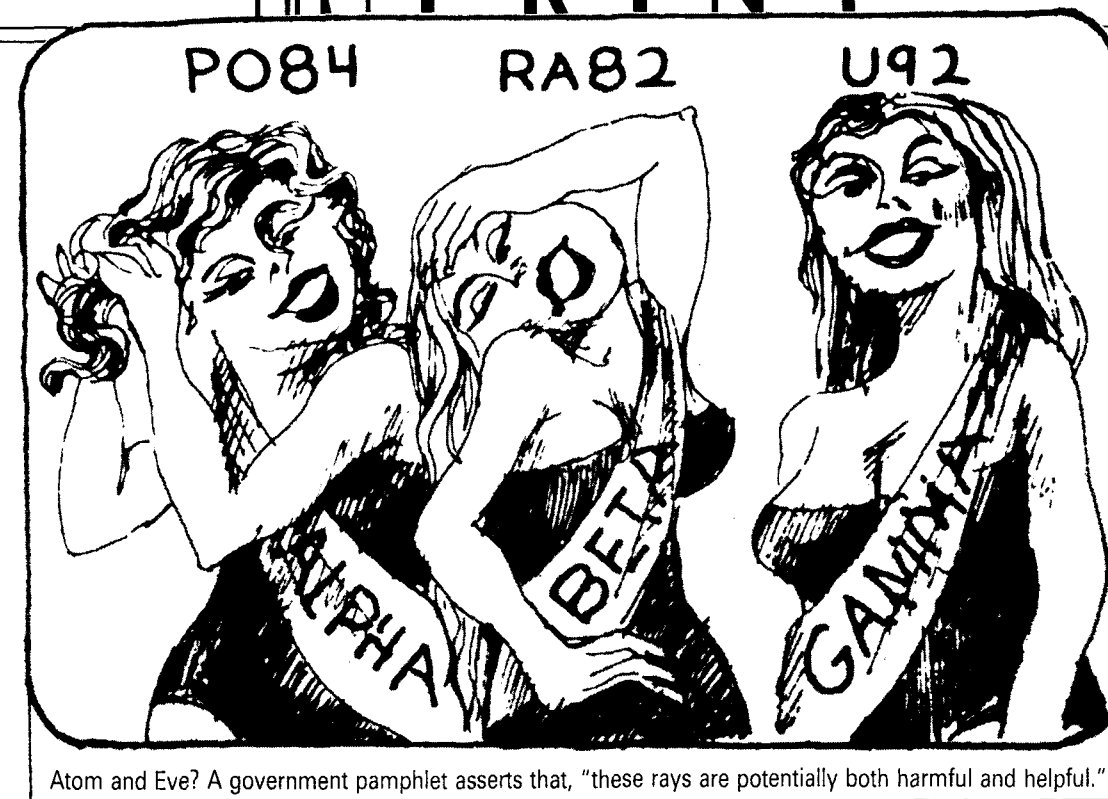
the decade through nostalgic images of its cars, soft drinks and home appliances.

Recasting America reminds us that, like many threadbare clichés, this one contains a grain of truth. Although there was more to the '50s than the invention of tail fins, a lot of what happened was tied to postwar affluence. Consumer goods and suburban housing were held out as rewards to those who conformed to the demands of the increasingly powerful government and corporate order.

These 14 essays, dedicated collectively to the memory of historian Warren Susman, provide an important reassessment of this period. The various authors cover everything from law to suburban ranch houses, and all attempt to burrow beneath the surface of establishment culture, either to critique its ideologies or to seek alternatives.

Particularly compelling are the descriptions of the many different ways the Cold War made its presence felt. For despite the affluence, this was an "age of anxiety," and Susman sets the tone for many subsequent arguments when, in the book's opening essay, he describes the Cold War as both symptom and cause of postwar uneasiness. If affluence was the carrot, then the threat of a Red Menace provided the stick that those in power used to enforce the corporate order. In sharp contrast to prewar progressives, who were consistently hostile to monopoly capitalism, the thinkers and policy-makers who shaped postwar opinion tied their acquiescence to the status quo in calls for consensus.

An age of experts: This period saw wide-ranging efforts to centralize opinion-making. Society's increasingly complex problems clearly required scientific solutions, and, as essays by David Noble and Terence Ball make clear, this emphasis on social science was prompted by a fear that mass participation in the democratic process would lead to totalitarianism. To avoid the risks posed by "amateurs," influential thinkers like Richard Hofstadter began to call for a society governed by informed elites.



Adjusting the fun house mirror

But it wasn't just that there were experts, it was that these specialists began to intrude on all aspects of life: while social scientists and economists entered government service in droves, experts in everything from psychology, child care and marital relations to home decoration, cooking, beauty and wardrobe began to exercise a far more insidious control over daily existence. By suggesting that people were unable to run even their private lives without assistance, this wave of experts encouraged individuals to replace inherited traditions with identities based on consumption.

It was, however, on the family that much of the weight of expert opinion came to rest. While social scientists may have had a large impact on public policy, the lives of individuals were more directly affected when experts like Dr. Spock began to tell them how to conduct themselves in private. Though theorists of the period offered the home as a place to escape from the pressures of the outside world, family life was also expected to form the basis for public morality.

Thus, as Elaine Tyler May shows, people feared that the entire social fabric would be threatened if women tried to function as independent human beings—as anything except mothers and homemakers. Family life was also supposed to include sexual fulfillment: women's magazines provided tips on how to keep a husband from straying by satisfying him at home, and as far as the kids were concerned, if youthful sexuality couldn't be repressed it could be redirected into early marriage.

Recasting America also shows the many different ways that people were encouraged to stay within "the system." Lary May, for instance, recounts how the motion picture establishment turned away from themes like the little tramp vic-

timized by society, and Norman Rosenberg describes the way strategies for working within the legal system replaced the "legal realism" of the '20s and '30s. In the social sciences too, success meant limitations: as funding from foundations and government grants became widespread, more neutral references to the "social system" often replaced criticism of the state and power relations.

In all of this the message was that the system seemed to be working, so why question it? A network of opinion, ranging from government pronouncements to advertising, combined to convince people that participation in the postwar consumer society would lead to security and happiness. The emphasis on individual fulfillment became a perfect way of hiding collective manipulation.

Alternative cultures: No matter how hard the sell, though, not everyone was buying the dominant ideology. For one thing, not everyone could afford the age of affluence:

as the white middle class took to the suburbs, many others were excluded, either by poverty or by segregation. And even among suburbanites there were increasing signs of disaffection, particularly among the young.

Alternatives to establishment culture form the subject of the final section of *Recasting America*. But while the studies that make up the first two-thirds of the book provide an excellent, diverse overview of the dominant culture, the alternative-cultures section is more of a grab bag. These essays tend to be narrower in focus and, in several cases, almost lose sight of the period covered by the book.

The essays on art, jazz and rock'n'roll all make interesting points, but each deals with only a specific aspect of the topic. Erika Doss' essay on the transition from regionalism to abstract expressionism, for example, is basically a study of Thomas Hart Benton in the '30s and early '40s, with Jackson Pollock appearing only as a late entrant.

Similarly, Lewis Erenberg's analysis of jazz pays far more attention to '30s swing than to postwar bebop. On the other hand, George Lipsitz's essay on the Chicano roots of rock covers the topic in a scattershot way clear up into the '80s.

But a couple of the essays in this section do raise broader issues. John Wright offers a thoughtful analysis of Ralph Ellison's descriptions of black leadership and tensions between black and white society. Likewise, Reinhold Wagnleitner's essay on Austria and the Cold War brings together a number of the book's themes in its description of how anti-communist paranoia dominated U.S. attempts to shape postwar Europe: even mild forms of dissent were so suppressed in the export version of American culture that it seemed to have no relation to the democracy the U.S. was supposed to be promoting.

Recasting America provides a refreshingly eclectic examination of Cold War culture: it is not, however, a comprehensive treatment of the period. The civil rights movement, the alternative provided by the Beats, the transition from '30s attempts to create a populist culture to postwar manipulation of mass culture, the rise of a youth culture centered around both music and new areas of consumption, the dichotomy between highbrow and lowbrow—all of these receive only passing mention. And one might also ask for still greater representation of women and minorities.

But it would be unfair to criticize a book that weighs in at more than 300 pages for not being twice that long, especially since what is covered is generally covered very well. The studies in this collection present an excellent series of alternative readings of the postwar period, and they will most certainly inspire future analysis of the ideologies that shaped an age dominated by a belief in the "end of ideology."

Martha Buskirk teaches art history at New York University.

Near Misses in Marketing #73

MECHANICS ILLUSTRATED

1st Annual **Swimsuit Issue**

fig. 1
This number offers loads of naughty "Hex-nut" appeal from Frederick's of Hardware!!

fig. 2
Bolt the doors before you don this sheer "Wanna Screw" One-piece!!!!

fig. 3
A bright and brassy Brazil-cut bikini is THE fast-lane fashion fastener!!!!

fig. 4
They'll all be hung up on this "spring-loaded" toggle bolt Ceiling hooker!!

Mexico

Continued from page 11

tion, the government is moving on several fronts. The Salinas group is convinced that Mexico must modernize in the Reagan-Thatcher tradition. This means not only imposing austerity on most Mexicans, but also opening the country's resources and industrial base to foreign capital and "integrating" the national economy in the "international market." To do so it must control not only the opposition but also its own party affiliates, its unions and peasant organizations—and the plethora of functionaries and power bosses associated with them. As the PRI destroys the organized labor movement to privatize state-owned enterprises and create attractive climates for foreign capital, it is also undermining its pillar of support—its union base. The government justified its attacks against the oil union and the Cananea mine as ways to root out corruption and eliminate obstacles to an efficient economy. But the ultimate purpose, as many warned after the assault on the oil union, was to remove obstacles to industry privatization.

In recent days two airlines and various steel plants and petrochemical sectors have been either closed or privatized. The phone and telecommunications company is next on the firing line, to be followed by sugar mills and more petrochemical sectors, all now state-run. Between April and June 71,000 workers were laid off and 13 enterprises were shut down. An estimated 30,000 oil workers have been laid off since the attack on the oil union leadership.

The government offers the unemployed new jobs as unskilled workers at the many

foreign-owned *maquiladoras*, or for-export-only assembly plants, sprouting up around the country at the minimum wage of \$3 a day. It appears the government is willing to risk the loss of its traditional labor base. Apparently it presumes that labor will not be able to build alternative organizations to defend itself against this onslaught in the next few years—which will be enough time to fully implement the modernization policies.

Among the most visible supporters of the Salinas administration are Mexico's 300 or so wealthiest families, the Catholic Church hierarchy, U.S. government officials and investors who have expressed their delight in Salinas' privatization policies.

"I'm enthused by the Mexican market. You can't help but be encouraged by the general direction the Mexican government is taking," says an AT&T executive. U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills says, "There really is an enormous change going on. We applaud it."

Yet for the vast majority of Mexicans, the government solution to the crisis is worse than the crisis itself. The PRD is attempting to provide a political framework for confronting the PRI and hopes to channel widespread popular fury that has been fueled during eight years of economic crisis. Up to now, Cardenas has insisted on a constitutional, non-violent strategy based on the assumption that the PRI government is illegal and has violated the popular will. But people, especially those in the countryside, are impatient. It is now common to hear a peasant say, "Cardenas doesn't want violence. But my gun is ready when he does."

David Brooks is director of the research organization Mexico-U.S. Dialogos.

Education

Continued from page 7

than 20 students.

Most students, but especially kids from poorer families, would probably learn more if there were a clearer connection between what they did in school and a potential career, including the promise of a job or college for anybody who graduates from high school.

The Chicago reforms obviously can't accomplish their fullest potential without the other complementary reforms and the money to fund them. There are serious obstacles to the success of such a massive experiment. But the stakes are high: the issue is providing not just a better-trained workforce, but producing citizens of a future society. And there could be no better, more hopeful, lesson than the experience that democracy works.

C A L E N D A R

Use the Calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is **\$25.00 for one insertion, \$35.00 for two insertions and \$15.00 for each additional insert**, for copy of 50 words or less (additional words are 50¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of **ITT Calendar**.

Rebmann, who has held similar workshops in Germany and has studied mediation and conflict resolution in the USA. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For registration and additional information, contact Grailville, 932 O'Bannonville Rd., Loveland, OH 45140, (513) 683-2340.

NEW YORK October 10-15

THE NEW YORK MARXIST SCHOOL
TUESDAY, Oct. 10 - Green Politics, Yanique Joseph, 6 p.m.
WEDNESDAY, Oct. 11 - A History of New York, Mike Wallace, 8 p.m., \$55
THURSDAY, Oct. 12 - Crack and Hegemony; Elombe Brath, David Forbes, Juliet Ucelli; 8 p.m.
FRIDAY, Oct. 13 - Performance, Music by the Daves, 8 p.m., \$6
SATURDAY, Oct. 14 - Performance, Music by Fred Frith, 8 p.m., \$6
SUNDAY, Oct. 15 - Profane Illuminations; Jerri Allyn, Anne Pitrone; 8 p.m.

All events take place at the New York Marxist School, 79 Leonard St., New York, NY 10013, (212) 941-0332. Unless otherwise noted, events are \$5.

LOVELAND, OH October 14

Grailville presents a two-part workshop on "Dance As Praise." Linda Robinson and the Praise Dancers of Christ Emmanuel Baptist Church will illustrate and teach dance as praise of God. Mary Meyer will teach movement based on the Laban method and "tap into" the creativity of people and with them create group dances. From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For registration and information, contact Grailville, 932 O'Bannonville Rd., Loveland, OH 45140, (513) 683-2340.

October 21

"Skills for Peacemaking" (a repeat of July 29 Peacemaking workshop) will explore and experiment with peacemaking skills similar to the study of a foreign language. Such topics as the language of aggression and competition, centering, paraphrasing, celebrating difference, and other positive ways to approach conflicts will be addressed. Conducted by Traude

CLEVELAND, OH November 21

Campus/Labor Institute featuring Millio Jeffrey, Mark Levinson, Anne Hill and others in workshops and sessions on building labor solidarity and grass-roots organizing. 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at St. Augustine's Church, 2486 West 14th St. Limited space; inquire today. Sponsored by the American Solidarity Movement, a project of the Democratic Socialists of America. For more info: DSA, 15 Dutch St., New York, NY 10038, (212) 962-0390.

BALTIMORE, MD November 10

"Toward the Nineties and Beyond." DSA public meeting featuring Cornel West, journalist Robert Kuttner and others at 8 p.m. at the Baltimore Hilton, 1726 Reisterstown Road, Pikesville (Exit 20 off Beltway). \$3 admission. For more info: DSA, 15 Dutch St., New York, NY 10038, (212) 962-0390.

November 10-12

1989 National Convention of the Democratic Socialists of America at the Baltimore Hilton, 1726 Reisterstown Road, with plenaries, workshops on domestic and international politics featuring Irving Howe, Barbara Ehrenreich, Cornel West, James Farmer and others. More information: DSA, 15 Dutch St., New York, NY 10038, (212) 962-0390.

WASHINGTON, DC November 17-19

Annual Meeting, Workers Education Local 189. Saturday, November 18 features "Teaching About Labor Issues in the Middle East" at the Dupont Plaza Hotel, Washington, DC. For information call (617) 599-7791. Work, Peace and Justice singalong at 8 p.m.

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PROGRAM OFFICER for **FUNDING EXCHANGE** NYC office. FEX, a national network of 13 foundations and numerous individual philanthropists, is committed to supporting grass-roots and national social change activism. This individual will evaluate proposals and advise on funding for the national donor-advised grantmaking program. Strong organizational, communications and administrative skills necessary. Knowledge and experience in women's rights and international issues, particularly U.S.-based groups concerned with Central America, South Africa and the Middle East, valuable. Starting date: Jan. 1. Salary: \$30,325 with excellent benefits and annual raise. Resume, including three references and political/community work, to: Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, NY, NY 10012. People of color, women, gay and lesbian candidates are encouraged to apply. Deadline: Nov. 1.

ORGANIZER. Bright energetic person with a vision of empowering women sought as **UNION ORGANIZER**. Experience preferred. Moderate travel. Send resume to: Kim Hodge, SCIU, 1216 E. McMillan #306, Cincinnati, OH 45206.

C L A S S I F I E D S

SOLIDARITY. Progressive development and information agency seeks dynamic, committed person to direct fundraising program for humanitarian aid to Third World social change movements. Experience needed in major gift solicitation, small donor outreach, budgeting and staff management. People of color strongly urged to apply. Send resume and letter to Grassroots International, P.O. Box 312, Cambridge, MA 02139.

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ORGANIZATIONS

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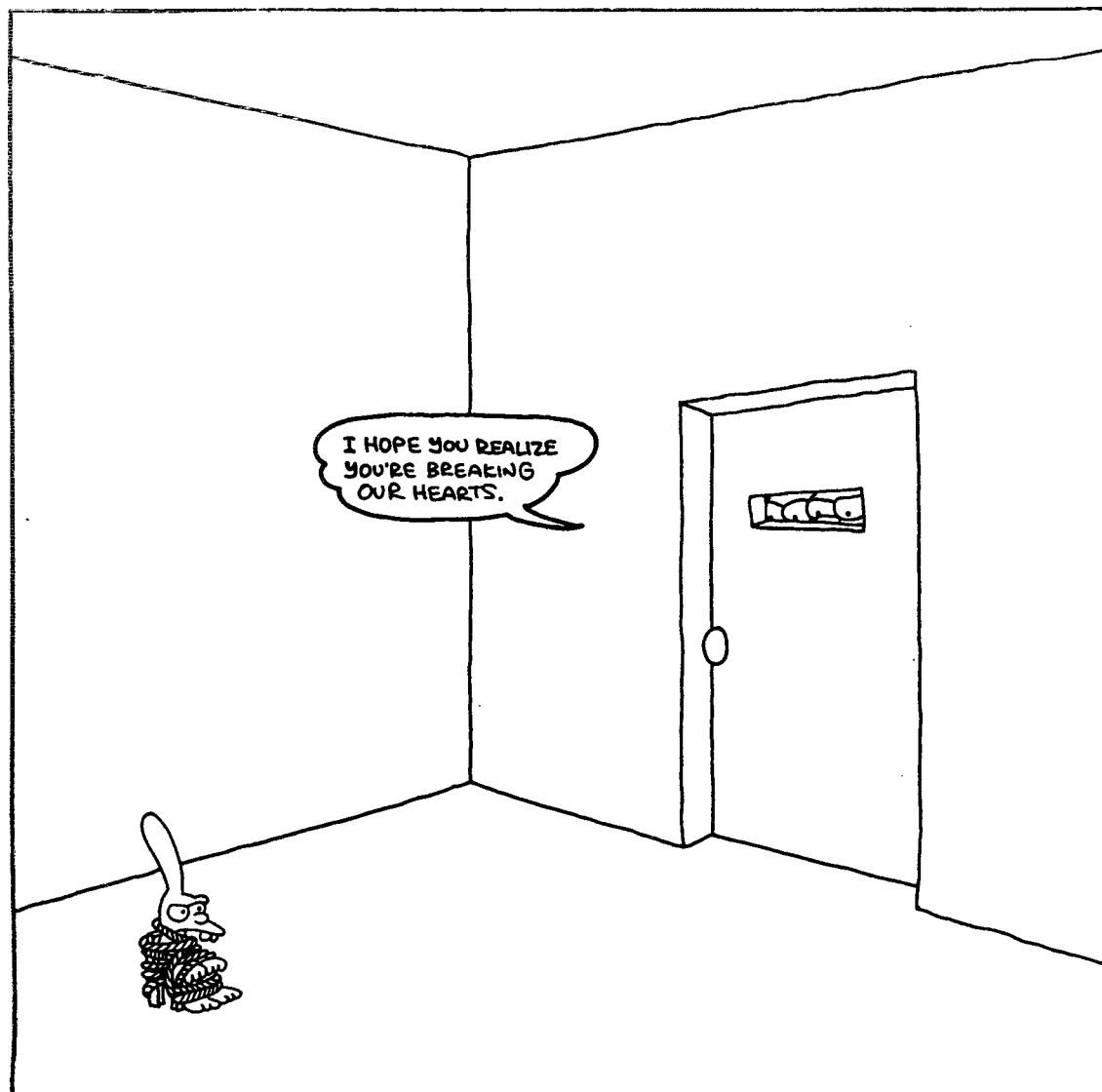
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WHAT WAS ONCE HUNGRY AND abrasive has grown plump and complacent. *Saturday Night Live* roams the airways draped in silk and sipping a glass of claret. Its humor has a dandified air, cute concepts boasting fluffy edges. Recently, after a serious dry spell, *Saturday Night Live* (SNL) won the Emmy award for best writing in a comedy variety show. Thus officially encouraged, the dapper minds of SNL will doubtless continue to produce safe, easy-listening comedy for some time to come.

On September 24, *Saturday Night Live* celebrated its 15th anniversary by taking up two and a half hours of NBC prime time. A celebrity-packed audience sat in studio 8H, the program's home base, and viewed an edited selection of comic memories on television monitors. Interspersed throughout the special were past and present hosts and cast members who did what little they could to keep the show standing. Toward the end Robin Williams was sent out to fill time, and he too had nothing terribly interesting to say. His flopping about was emblematic of *Saturday Night Live*'s general creative paralysis.

The original inspiration was different. In 1975 Lorne Michaels finally realized his dream of placing an intelligent comedy on network television. NBC's *Saturday Night* (its original title) quickly proved how flat the rest of television was. By not only focusing on neglected topics but framing them with passion and spirit, the show seemed otherworldly. The sets looked unkempt, providing dark corners where a table and chair might be the lone props supporting a premise; the writing poked interesting holes in the standard variety format; the actors almost pushed against the screen. Here was a show that made its small piece of the medium resonate.

Corporate comedy: This could last only so long. Inside a corporate structure, such vitality must always be harnessed to serve capital. Chevy Chase's rise to fame helped to pollute the initial mood, urged on by star-making profit machinery. After his departure in the second season, SNL caught a second wind; the will to experiment survived. You could tell that alternatives were being considered. Still, the inescapable came to be. By the third season, in 1977-78, SNL generated a lucrative batch of characters and catch phrases, a commercial impulse that clearly prevails to this day.

No matter how daring, SNL has invariably represented one dominant sensibility: white. During the first five seasons there was but Garrett Morris, who, as he once jokingly put it, played all parts "darker than Tony Orlando." There were no black writers to furnish material; Morris was at the mercy of white conceptions. (In a *Wizard of Oz* takeoff, Morris was cast as a flying monkey.)

While Morris did not display the comic range of Dan Aykroyd or Laraine Newman, the writers could have extended their imaginations to keep from setting him in racially distorted vignettes. A revealing comment by Al Franken, longtime contributor to the show, can be found in the book *Saturday Night: A Backstage History of Saturday Night Live*: "We relied on [Morris] to bring some blackness to the show, because what's our experience? He had to bring it to us."

Where Garrett Morris languished, Eddie Murphy thrived. Murphy's talent eclipsed most of his fellow cast members. After Murphy left the show for films, however, SNL returned to its lighter shade of pale.

(Comic Damon Wayans and performance artist Danitra Vance lasted one season before being shown the back door.) Looking at the current cast, one might conclude that there are no funny people of African, Asian or Latino descent.

In an age when 23 corporations own the major media (down from 50 in 1983) and information is continually centralized, there exists no real satirical thrust on network television. *Late Night With David Letterman* makes fun of General Electric's consumer products, but not its weapons. SNL, too, evades substantial conflict with concentrated power, preferring light digs at easy targets such as George Bush's vague pronouncements. A sense of danger and risk is essential to satire. As Michael O'Donoghue, a former SNL writer and one-time producer, told *Mother Jones* magazine in 1983:

"Comedy is based on the tension of exploring what we are forbidden to talk about, and the rules change every few years. In the '50s, it was the family. In the '60s, it was drugs and sex. Now it's corporations. They will kill you. That's simply a fact. But where can you say it? Not on television. Not in newspapers. Very few people have the courage to look at that, and if they do have the courage they are denied access to the media. In the '60s, every screaming paranoid headline in the *East Village Other* about conspiracies and atrocities turned out to be true. But where can you say it? You can hand out a mimeographed sheet on Times Square. Real freedom of speech is using NBC on their level to communicate."

Show business, pro-business: I spent my senior year of high school in a small town near South Bend, Ind. The NBC affiliate there, WNDU, refused to broadcast *Saturday Night Live*, then in its second season. South Bend being the home of Notre Dame University, perhaps it was felt that tender Catholic beliefs could not handle the show's sacrilegious bent, so innocuous late-night movies filled *Saturday Night*'s slot. My only recourse was to try to receive the show through a far-off Fort Wayne station. The reception ranged from bad to pure static; there were nights when I got just the audio.

This barrier never muted my enthusiasm for the show. I imagined that I was receiving clandestine transmissions from the television underground. At times the humor was augmented by double images and flickering snow; the edge became keener. That aura of comic adventure lifted me through the next week of school, until it was time again to endlessly adjust our television antenna toward the signal from Fort Wayne.

Today there is no inspirational tug from SNL. It is a dull reflection of the contemporary glut of comedy clubs and cable specials. Even the old shows are now sliced into hour-hour segments, called *The Best of Saturday Night*, and pitched to the corporate winds. Comedy is big business, and comedians trim their talents to meet the requirements of the marketplace. As a result, comic innovation, always in scant supply, is increasingly marginalized. Instead of offering an alternative to the commercialization of humor, *Saturday Night Live* endorses it, implying that the definitive goal of American comedy is not producing laughter or defying convention but attaining and conserving show-business privilege. ■

Dennis Perrin writes a twice-monthly media column syndicated by Alternet in Washington, D.C.

